

**HUMANE POLITICAL ECONOMY**

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# Humane

## Political Economy

WITH THIS SUMMER number, MODERN AGE commences its third year of publication. One of the principal purposes for which MODERN AGE exists is to help in the recovery of a humane scale in the civil social order: a society made for the truly human person, not an impersonal collectivism forcing all men into a universal mold.

So we think it fitting that our third year of publication should open with a number that emphasizes a humanized economics. The systematic study of economics commenced as a branch of moral philosophy; then it allied itself with statecraft, and so was called political economy; but for more than a century, many writers on economics have aspired to make the Dismal Science the be-all and end-all of human striving. In such a system, men become no better than units of production and consumption. Divorced from religion, morals, the imagination, and ordinary human longings, economics becomes thoroughly inhumane—indeed, hostile to high human achievement. The doctrines of Marx, as Lord Keynes wrote once, are the *reductio ad absurdum* of Jeremy Bentham's economic calculus.

In our time, Professor William Roepke has exerted perhaps the greatest influence toward humanizing economic thought—re-

lating it once more to the human person and his wants. One of Dr. Roepke's important books, *Civitas Humana*, bears the subtitle *A Humane Order of Society*. We feel honored, then, to be permitted to publish as the first essay in this number Mr. Roepke's memoir *The Economic Necessity of Freedom*.

Several other distinguished European social thinkers contribute to this number. Dr. Max Thurn-Valsassina criticizes foreign-aid programs. Professor Daniel Villey, of the University of Poitiers, writes of Catholic doctrine and opinion on a free economy—the most important discussion of this subject ever published, we think, so that we will continue M. Villey's article in our fall number. Dr. Helmut Schoeck, German-born and American-educated, takes up an aesthetic question. Dr. Thomas Molnar, educated at Brussels but teaching in Brooklyn, describes French conservative opinion.

In general, we feel that this issue of MODERN AGE is the strongest, in substance and style, we have yet published. Mr. Anthony Kerrigan's "Slums of Spain", for instance, combines first-hand knowledge with humane understanding and power of expression. We have found such writers as we had hoped our review would attract.

Also we have found a public. With every number of MODERN AGE that has come from the printer, we have gained nearly a thousand more subscribers. We must retain all these readers, and continue to grow at the same rate for more than a year, and obtain some substantial help from foundations or private donors, if our magazine is to endure. But we now feel that in our age, at least, conservatives are not merely what John Stuart Mill called them, "the stupid party."

—R. K.

# The Economic Necessity of Freedom

WILHELM ROEPKE

*A great humane economist describes the growth of his ideas.*

Wilhelm Roepke, who has been called the architect of the economic policy of the West German government, was born in Schwarmstedt, Hanover, in 1899. He received his doctorate in political science from the University of Marburg in 1921, and in the following year became an advisor to the Weimar Republic on problems of reparations. In 1926 and 1927, he studied problems of agrarian economy in the United States upon the invitation of the Rockefeller Foundation. He returned to teach in Europe; and during 1930 and 1931 was a member of the German National Commission on Unemployment and an advisor to the Brüning government. From 1933 to 1937, he was a professor of the

University of Istanbul; during that time he undertook the reorganization of its Department of Economics for the administration of Kemal Ataturk.

Since 1937, he has taught at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. In 1953, he received from President Heuss of the German Federal Republic the Grand Cross of Merit for his services in the reconstruction of the German economy. Dr. Roepke is co-editor of *Kyklos* and *Studium Generale*; and the author, among other books, of *German Commercial Policy* (1934), *Crises and Cycles* (1936), *Lehre von der Wirtschaft* (1937), *International Economic Disintegration* (1942), *Civitas Humana* (1943), *Internationale Ordnung* (1945), *The Solution of the German Problem* (1945), *Ist die deutsche Wirtschaftspolitik richtig?* (1950), *Mass und Mitte* (1951), *The Social Crisis of Our Time* (1952), and *Fenseits von Angebot und Nachfrage* (1958).

BORN IN THE LAST DAYS of 1899 on the Lüneburger Heide, where my father was a country doctor, I had the good luck to pass my childhood and earliest youth in the sunset of the long, rosy European day lasting from the Congress of Vienna to 1914. Those whose lives began in our present Arctic night can have no just conception of those times, and to try to summon up their atmosphere makes one

feel rather like an Adam telling his sons about the life that had existed before they could have been. That figure is not, of course, applicable to the whole world of my youth, which was hardly everywhere a Paradise, but it is true enough of what I knew or could understand of the world before I became a soldier. The beginnings of 1914 were laid long before my birth, but history does not advance by the order-

ly route that the notion of "progress" implies; study and reflection may find the present's furthest source, but through the years the stream from it runs a random way, accepting now one tributary and now another, so that many far uplands remained untouched before the gathering waters burst into flood with the First World War.

A man's own life meanders in a similar way, and I know I shall find it hard to indicate all the currents that, hindering or sustaining me, have brought me to the point at which I presently rest. The names on the way are numerous — Hanover, the neighborhood of Hamburg, the universities of Goettingen, Tuebingen and Marburg, Berlin, Jena, the United States, an Austrian provincial capital, Istanbul, and now Geneva — and the chances that led me to each, though I cannot scrutinize the providence that intended them, seem to me to have some pattern of logic directed toward my own deeper education and understanding of the world in which I have lived. The immeasurably greater flow of history has its logic, too, and my task as an economist has been to explore a delimited portion of it, to decide why it had gone the ways it had, and to apply whatever rules were there discovered to surmising its future course, depending upon whether or not men acknowledged these rules. The smaller region I am now attempting to explore is where my own life and history have been confluent, so I think I can properly begin with the cataclysm by which the next forty years of history were to be determined — the war of 1914.

I belong, then, to the generation of Germans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Belgians who in their youth and young manhood went through the horrors of gigantic battles on the plains of France and whose subsequent lives have been shaped by this common experience. At an early and receptive age, there was brutally revealed to me much that in the quiet pre-War dusk had been obscured, and the

sights of these times were ever to remain in my mind's eye, the constantly renewed starting points of the thoughts that confirmed in me a violent hatred of war. War I came to see as the expression of a brutal and stupid national pride that fostered the craving for domination and set its approval on collective immorality. Shortly in the course of this revelation, I vowed that if I were to escape from the hell in which it was given to me, I would make my remaining life meaningful by devoting it to the task of preventing the recurrence of this abomination, and I resolved to extend my hand beyond the confines of my nation to any who might be my collaborators in the task. In this I was only typical of many thousands of my contemporaries, who, facing each other on the battle lines, were determined that no one should again find himself forced into their positions.

My adult life began with a crisis of international society, passed into the stage of revolution we call war. To understand the reasons for the crisis, to learn what brought it to the stage of war, and to find if war indeed resolved anything, I determined to become an economist and a sociologist. Like all who are young, much of my curiosity must have been for its own sake, but since from the first my studies were directed toward the prevention of the thing I studied, a moral imperative lay behind them. Looking back on the third of a century that had passed since then — a third of a century that has taken me through two revolutions, the biggest inflation of any time, the spiritual ferment and social confusion of my country, and my own exile — I see that the determining background of my scientific studies has been far less those quiet halls of learning I have known in the Old and the New Worlds than it has been the battlefields of Picardy. The tendency of my thought, I can see from a later vantage-point, has always been *international*, seeking to examine the larger relationship between countries, for it was in a crisis of this relationship that my thought began.



If I was typical of those who went through the War in my wish to make sure that it should not happen again, I think I was also typical in the analysis I made of it. We who were under a common obligation to kill one another had a great deal more in common too, and, since all of us on either side were roughly trained along the same lines, our revulsion with war brought us pretty much to a single conclusion. Our personal experience told us that a society capable of such monstrous depravity must be thoroughly rotten. We had been educated just enough to call this society "capitalism." Dumping everything into this concept that seemed to us rightly damnable, we became socialists.

Particularly for a young German of those days, this seemed the obvious path to take, for the political system of which Prussia was the exponent had been supported by every political group except the socialists. Those who wished to make a radical protest against the Prussian system became socialists almost as a matter of course. No one can understand modern socialism as a mass movement who does not see it as a product of the political development that took place in the nineteenth century in Germany after Bismarck had deprived of all influence the liberal and democratic forces that made their appearance on the surface during the unfortunate Revolution of 1848. To the extent that the German bourgeoisie made its peace with Bismarck and his state, social democracy became the gathering point, and the only one, not alone of social revolutionaries but also of those for whom the social was quite secondary to the political revolution. Very few guessed how much Prussian mentality lay hidden in this same socialism, for so long as it was merely a persecuted opposition, kept away from all responsibility, its leaders managed to conceal its inner contradictions.

So, as I have said, the explanation of things we formed in the trenches of the First World War was quite simple. This

means war, we told ourselves, the bankruptcy of the entire "system." Our protest against imperialism, militarism, and nationalism was a protest against the prevailing economic and political system, which was a feudal and capitalistic one. The protest and its attendant denial made, the affirmation followed of itself: socialism. None of us was quite clear about the concrete content of our affirmation, and those of whom we expected enlightenment seemed, at bottom, no more certain than we; but this, rather than a discouragement, was a challenge to search further.

And, in fact, we searched; I know that I did. And I think that many of us, after years of confusion, arrived at a point we had hardly expected. We learned that we had gone astray with our very point of departure. In my own case the realization came, as it must have with most others, bit by bit through study and experience. Because the starting point had been the protest against war and nationalism, there followed from it a commitment to liberalism in the sphere of international economic relations; in other words, to free trade. This commitment I myself made, and I have not since departed from it. No more than average insight was needed to see that there was an irreconcilable difference between socialism and international economic liberalism, a difference not to be done away with by the lip-service of individual socialists to free trade.

After all, nobody was immediately working for world socialism. But if socialism could only be achieved within a national framework, state boundaries took on a new and primarily economic significance. Did not the simplest logic make it clear that a socialist state, which directed economic life within the nation, could not grant even so much freedom to foreign trade as had the protective tariffs against which we had protested? The deduction was this: there is only one ultimate form of socialism, the national. With that, my generation wanted nothing to do.

Other reflections followed. With a rec-

ognition of the responsibility of one's own government in causing the war, went a great wariness about the powers of the modern state and, along with this, about the powers of the various pressure groups within the nation. That neither state nor pressure group should again attain the evil eminence it had in the War, the power of one would have to be limited and the other would have to be suppressed. At first, these seemed essential points of a socialist program. But in time it became evident that they were liberal notions, expressed by the great liberal thinkers, and they appeared to be socialist only because the socialists, so long as they were not in power, found them useful. Wherever socialism approached power after the War and exerted influence on government, the tendency was all toward acknowledging the omniscience of the state, and, looking at the socialists who held office, what slightest guarantee was there that the proposed tyranny would be a rule of the wisest and the best? What proof was there that the new despotism would be for the general good when "nationalization" and "planned economy," those two vaunted socialist weapons against monopoly and vested interest, in actual practice led to the strengthening of the pressure groups? And where socialism had entire control, as in Russia, and power increasingly gathered in a single hand, wasn't the situation worse for the mere individual's liberty than in those countries where many private groupings of wealth and power continued to compete side by side?

Doubts of this kind were not merely the result of an abstract enthusiasm for liberty. Life in the army had shown what it meant for the individual to exist as part of an apparatus whose every function assumed lack of freedom and unconditional obedience. The immoralities and discomforts of army life were obvious enough; to make war means to kill and be killed, the exaltation of lying and the fostering of hatred for these purposes, and the destruction, filth, thirst, hunger,

and illness that accompanied large-scale killing; but this physical degradation was also accompanied by a spiritual one that worked to the total debasement of human dignity in mass existence, mass feeding, mass sleep — that frightful soldier's life in which a man was never alone and in which he was without resource or appeal against the might (inhuman but wielded by man) that had robbed him of his privacy. Less well organized than the army, civilian life retained a few crevices where privacy could be enjoyed, but there too the notion worked that the fundamental liberties could be abrogated. Looking back on it today, I can see that this life of constraint had its compensations, which lay in the human contacts its very inhumanity enforced; but at the time I saw only its inhumanity and could not have borne it but for the thought of a higher goal — the elimination of this same thing in the future — and the sense of duty in which I had been raised.

I could not then have extolled for you the peculiar virtues of the soldier, for I was profoundly antimilitarist, so longing for civilian life that every leave was a foretaste of paradise. The fact that I and my fellows who were university graduates did not differ in this from our comrades who were proletarians proves that we did not have a sentimental longing for something that the proletariat had long ago forgotten. Leave — the periodic return to the basic freedom of civilian existence — meant as much to the worker as to us of the "professional classes." It is not class prejudice, anxious for outmoded privileges, that speaks out against the lack of freedom in a collectivized, i.e. militarized, system.

The more I looked into it, the more clearly I saw that my indignation over the war was a protest against the unlimited power of the state. The state — this elusive but all-powerful entity that was outside of moral restraints — had led us into the War, and now continued to make us suffer while it intimidated and deceived us. War was simply the rampant essence

of the state, collectivity let loose, so was it not absurd to make one's protest against the dominance of man over man take the form of professing collectivism? Not all the pacifist, antimilitarist, and freedom-demanding statements of even the most honest socialists could obscure the fact that socialism, if it was to mean anything at all, meant accepting the state as Leviathan not only for the emergency of war but also for a long time to come.

Any future increase of state power could only bring about an increase of what was now issuing from the unwarranted, but still limited, power of the state, and only the extremest gullibility could expect deliverance from the evils of militarism by a society that made militarism a permanent institution. Collectivism and war were, in essence, one and the same thing; they both gave endless and irresponsible power to the few and degraded the many. If socialists really were not serious about their collectivism, they were playing a curious and dangerous game in trying to fill their ranks by announcing goals that no one whose final commitment was to freedom could accept.

Thus was marked out a route of inquiry and effort that I continued along for a quarter of a century. The signposts were few and not often clear, and often enough I had to grope my way painstakingly back. Nor was the way itself easy, for at every turn stood the spirit of war, nationalism, Machiavellianism, and international anarchy. As my professional career progressed and I was called to positions of some official importance, I spoke for what reason dictated in the field of political economy, and this meant speaking against most of the groups and policies that prevailed in the field of economics between the wars. It was a struggle against economic nationalism, the groups that supported it, or the particular strategies it employed — a struggle against monopolies, heavy industry, and large-scale farming interests, against the inexcusable inflation, whose engineers obscured what they were

doing with fantastic monetary theories, against the aberrations of the policy of protective tariffs, against the final madness of autarky.

To whatever extent my abilities and my office allowed, and wherever I found those with whom to join cause, I sought to mend the torn threads of international trade and to normalize international money and credit relations, to have German reparations considered in their proper aspect and without regard to "patriotism," to aid the re-integration of the vanquished countries into a democratic and peaceful world, and, when the crisis of 1929 broke out, to have adopted an economy that would not end in the blind alley of deflation and autarky. Those of us who spoke thus were a small company, and the degree of our effectiveness is shown in the history of 1918-1939. Forced out of my position by the Nazi regime, I had to emigrate from Germany, and first from Turkey and then from Switzerland could contemplate the flood of political nihilism that swirled over Europe.

It would only be a sort of inverted vanity to say that the Second World War marked the failure of the effort that I had conceived in the trenches of the First World War. I think it more modest to say that in a fashion I succeeded — not, of course, in external accomplishment but in having now learned how the goal may be achieved that my youthful optimism looked toward, though the way there is a far harder one than my youth dreamed. And I think the history of the past thirty-five years proves that my starting-point was a good one. The starting-point was apparently paradoxical: I sided with the socialists in their rejection of capitalism and with the adherents of capitalism in their rejection of socialism. I was to find in time that these two negatives amounted, as two minuses in algebra can be a plus, to a positive. Both rejections were accepted because they were based on certain positive notions about the nature of man and the sort of existence that was fitting to that nature, so that as the inquiry proceeded

it always had something concrete and real to refer to and was protected from the tendency of the over-abstract to result in monstrosities when it is brought into the human realm. The third way I have pursued, beginning on it as it were out of the accident of history, has come with good reason to be called "economic humanism."

The accident of history has also required, as I have said, that I should look on economics largely in their international aspect, and in this aspect the operation of economics has again and again shown itself to be a question of order. Order is something continuous; in its true sense, it is a harmony of parts, not a regularity imposed from without. International order can only be a wider projection of the order prevailing within nations, and if today, as in the immediate past, we find ourselves more engaged with the problems of international order, that is because international relations are a screen upon which the internal phenomena of a disintegrating society are thrown and enlarged, making them visible long before they become evident within the various nations. The disturbance of the international order is not only a symptom of the inner malaise; it is also a sort of quack therapy, as is proved by the case of the totalitarian states, which temporarily avert collapse by aggressively diverting the forces of the destruction to the outside.

The years between the wars saw much mistaking of the symptoms for the disease. The international crisis, looked on in isolation, was taken for a regrettable aberration of an otherwise healthy society of nations. So followed the attempts to mend things by improving the charter of the League of Nations, holding world-economy conferences, revising debts, arranging the co-operation of money-issuing banks, repeating the irrefutable arguments for free trade, and the rest of it. August, 1939, was terrible proof that profounder measures were needed. The lessons of it are lost if we assume the present international crisis is simply one of a healthy West besieged

by forces from without. There remains an internal crisis and the external, the international, one will not be resolved until the two are grasped as a unity and so dealt with.

I think I have demonstrated how I came to see that socialism did not have the cure for our social ills, that indeed socialism was a heresy which aggravated these ills the more men acted on it. The economic "orthodoxy" according to which I adjudged socialism a heresy was historical liberalism, and with this liberalism I am quite willing to take my stand. What such liberalism advocates in the economic realm can be very simply stated. It holds that economic activities are not the proper sphere of any planning, enforcing, and penalizing authority; these activities are better left to the spontaneous co-operation of all individuals through a free market, unregulated prices, and open competition.

But there is more to the matter than the advocacy of a certain economic technique. As an economist, I am supposed to know something about prices, capital interests, costs, and rates of exchange, and all of them supply arguments for free enterprise; but my adherence to free enterprise goes to something deeper than mere technical grounds, and the reason for it lies in those regions where each man's social philosophy is ultimately decided. Socialists and non-socialists are divided by fundamentally different conceptions of life and life's meaning. What we judge man's position in the universe to be will in the end decide whether our highest values are realized in man or in society, and our decision for either the former or the latter will also be the watershed of our political thinking.

Thus my fundamental opposition to socialism is to an ideology that, in spite of all its "liberal" phraseology; gives too little to man, his freedom, and his personality; and too much to society. And my opposition on technical grounds is that socialism, in its enthusiasm for organization, centralization, and efficiency, is committed to means that simply are not compatible with human



freedom. Because I have a very definite concept of man derived from the classic-Christian heritage of Europe in which alone the idea of liberty has anywhere appeared, because that concept makes man the image of God whom it is sinful to use as a means, and because I am convinced that each man is of unique value owing to his relationship to God but is not the god declared by the *hybris* of an atheistic humanism — because of these things, I look on any kind of collectivism with the utmost distrust. And, following from these convictions along the lines of reason, experience, and the testimony of history, I arrive at the conclusion that only a free economy is in accordance with man's freedom and with the political and social structure and the rule of law that safeguard it. Aside from such an economic system (for which I make no claims of automatically perfect functioning), I see no chance of the continued existence of man as he is envisaged in the religious and philosophical traditions of the West. For this reason, I would stand for a free economic order even if it implied material sacrifice and if socialism gave the certain prospect of material increase. It is our undeserved luck that the exact opposite is true.

There is a deep moral reason for the fact that an economy of free enterprise brings about social health and a plenitude of goods, while a socialist economy ends in social disorder and poverty. The "liberal" economic system delivers to useful ends the extraordinary force inherent in individual self-assertion, whereas the socialist economy suppresses this force and wears itself out in the struggle against it. Is the system unethical that permits the individual to strive to advance himself and his neighbor through his own productive achievement? Is the ethical system the one that is organized to suppress this striving? I have very little patience with the moralizing of intellectuals who preach the virtues of the second system, inspired by their ambition to hold commanding places in the vast supervisory machinery such a system entails but

too uncritical of themselves to suspect their own *libido dominandi*. It makes virtue appear irrational and places an extravagant demand upon human nature when men in serving virtue in a collectivist economy must act against their own proper interests in ways that, as even the simplest of them can see, do nothing to increase the total wealth. The collectivist state that, in peacetime, supports itself with the patent dishonesties of foreign-exchange control, price ceilings, and confiscatory taxes acts with greater immorality than the individual who violates these regulations to preserve the fruits of his own labor. I cannot believe that it is moral and will make for a better world to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.

The great error of socialism is its steadfast denial that man's desire to advance himself and his family, and to earn and retain what will provide his family's well-being far beyond the span of his own life, is as much in the natural order as the desire to be identified with the community and serve its further ends. They are both in the natural order, both are intrinsic to humanity, and balanced against each other they prevent the excesses that destroy a fit human existence. To deny the elementary force of self-interest in society is an unrealism that eventually leads to a kind of brutal internal *Realpolitik*. The eccentric morality that confuses the eternal teachings of Christianity with the communism of early Christians expecting the imminent end of all things, and calls private property unChristian and immoral, ends by approving a society in which highly immoral means — lying, propaganda, economic coercion, and naked force — are necessities. An economic order which has to rely on propaganda in the press, in moral tracts, and over the radio and on decorations and threats to make people work and save, and which cannot rely on them to see, as peasants do, the self-evident need for work and saving, is basically unsound and contrary to the natural order. An economic system that presupposes saints and

heroes cannot endure. As Gustav Thibon says: "Every social system that makes it necessary for the majority of men, in the ordinary conduct of their lives, to display aristocratic virtues reveals itself to be unhealthy." The welfare state, in its rage for egalitarianism, gives its citizens the status and opportunities of slaves, but calls on them to act like heroes.

In speaking of a balance between the elementary drive of self-interest and the urge of the communal sense, I am of course admitting that the former needs taming and channeling. At the very outset, self-interest becomes family interest, and the "civilizing" restraints this sets upon it are too obvious to need mention. Beyond this, a free market operating within a framework of firm legislation seems about as much as is required in the way of economic organization to confine the acquisitive instinct to socially tolerable forms. But this in itself is not enough. The defender of a "liberal" economy must make plain that the realm of economy in which self-interest develops, constrained by legislation and competition, is not set against but enclosed within the realm in which is developed man's capacity for devotion, his ability to serve ends that do not look to his own immediate betterment. Society as a whole cannot be based on the law of supply and demand, and it is a good conservative conviction that the state is more than a joint-stock company. Men who measure their strengths in the competition of the open market have to be united by a common ethic; otherwise competition degenerates into an internecine struggle. Market economy is not in itself a sufficient basis of society. It must, instead, be lodged in an over-all order that not only allows, and is in some measure determined by, supply and demand, free markets, and competition, but that also allows the imperfections and hardships of economic freedom to be corrected and helps man to attain an existence in which he is more than the mere economic animal. For such an existence, man must voluntarily accept the

community's prior rights as against certain short-term satisfactions of his own, and he must feel that in serving the community he ennoble his own life with the *philia* by which, according to Aristotle, men are united in political societies. Without this, he leads a miserable existence, and he knows it.

The economist, too, has his occupational disease: restricted vision. I speak from experience when I say that it is not easy for him to look beyond his field and modestly admit that the market is not the whole of the world but only a segment of it, important enough, to be sure, but still merely a part of the larger order for which the theologian and the philosopher, not the economist as such, are competent. Here one could quote a variation on the words of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, the eighteenth-century physicist: "Whoever understands economics only, understands not even them." My own effort has always been to look beyond the fence enclosing the narrow field of my science, for I have learned that it is not to be worked fruitfully without allowing for the highly complex world in which even the simplest economic law must, in the end, operate. In my own passion for synthesis, I do not think I have forgotten that these laws must be allowed to function according to their own nature; but the more I have inquired into their logic and the effects of ignoring it, the more I have seen that their operating toward humanly good ends presupposes an equivalent function of human goodness. Economic laws will not work to our benefit unless they work within a society that admits of the human virtues which issue in true service (not just "service to the customer"), devotion, charity, hospitality, and in the sacrifices which genuine communities demand.

Two things are absolutely fatal for such a society: mass and centralization. Community, fraternity, charity — they are all possible only in the small, easily comprehended circles that are the original patterns of human society, the village com-



munity, the community of small and medium-sized towns, etc. These small circles of human warmth and mutual responsibility increasingly give way to mass and centralization, the amorphous agglutination of the big cities and industrial centers with their deracination, mass organization, and anonymous bureaucracy that end in the monster state by which, with the help of police and tax officials, our crumbling society is now actually held together. This society, paradoxically fragmented and amorphous, at the same time crowned with a vast monolithic superstructure whose irrational weight continues the pulverization that must in time bring the whole thing to collapse, I have tried to describe in *The Social Crisis of Our Time in Civitas Humana*, and in *Beyond Supply and Demand*.

The measures needed to avert this collapse immediately suggest themselves—we must decentralize, put down roots again, extract men out of the mass and allow them to live in forms of life and work appropriate to men. To some this seems a romantic and unworldly program, but I know of no alternative to it that does not threaten to aggravate fatally the disease. Because a suggested treatment is distasteful to the very lethargy induced by the illness it is intended to cure, it does not mean it is impractical. In the gravity of our present situation, there are no easy measures that are going to save man, no gently homeopathic doses that will enable him to shake off his symptoms without effort. If man is to be restored to the possibility of simple, natural happiness, it can only be done by putting him once more in a humanly tolerable existence, where, placed in the true community that begins with the family and living in harmony with nature, he can support himself with labor made purposeful by the institution of private property. The almost desperate character of this effort does not testify against its necessity if we wish to save our civilization. In measure as we see how slight are its chances of acceptance

and how serious the present situation is, we can see how badly it is needed.

Here, too, lies one of the basic reasons for the crisis of modern democracy, which has gradually degenerated into a centralized mass democracy of Jacobin complexion and stands more urgently in need of those counterweights of which I spoke in my book *Civitas Humana*. Thus we are led to a political view whose conservative ingredients are plainly recognizable in our predilection for natural law, tradition, *Corps intermédiaires*, federalism and other defenses against the flood of modern mass democracy. We should harbor no illusions about the fateful road which leads from the Jacobinism of the French Revolution to modern totalitarianism.

If I find some tendencies of liberal thinking compatible with this conservatism, I think I do so in a manner learned from Lord Acton and Jacob Burckhardt, and without being deceived that certain individual and hard-to-define currents of thought which are commonly thrown together under the heading of "liberalism" are not free of elements of moral and spiritual disintegration. They are the currents of modern "progressivism," the type of rationalism and intellectualism that I have identified with "sinistrismo."

I cannot here draw the portrait of the progress-minded modern who, in my reckoning, accounts for so much that is wrong in our world, but I can list a few of the things that attend him: the dissecting intellect, lacking wisdom and even common sense; the radicalism going in short relays from humanitarianism to bestiality; the nihilism of intellectuals who have lost hold of ultimate convictions and values and ceased to be true *clerics*; the relativism tolerating everything, including the most brutal intolerance; the egalitarianism that, presupposing an omnipotent state machinery, leads to extreme inequality in the most important respect, the distribution of power, and unleashes the soul-corroding forces of envy and jealousy; the grimace of an art called modern whose one achieve-

ment is to mirror our society's inner disintegration. Who has seen these things needs no extraordinary illumination to know toward what they tend, for the past twenty years have given us enough examples of its ruin and misery; and no one, seeing all that has been the work of men and not of blind forces, can come to any other conclusion than that men must take council with themselves and set their faces toward another way.

Here my thought comes to its deepest layer, resting on the point from which, in the logical order, all men's thinking must proceed, though in actual life they may be years gaining it. The point is one of religious conviction; I will say it in all candor: the nidus of the malady from which our civilization suffers lies in the individual soul and is only to be overcome within the individual soul. For more than a century, we have made the hopeless effort, more and more baldly proclaimed, to get along without God and vaingloriously to put man, his science, his art, his political contrivances, in God's place. I am convinced that the insane futility of this effort, now evident only to a few, will one day break on most men like a tidal wave, and that they will see that self-idolatry has created a situation in which a moral and spiritual creature cannot exist, a situation in which, despite television, pleasure cruises, and air-conditioned modern architecture, man

cannot exist at all. It is as though we had wanted to add to the already existing proofs of God's existence, a new and finally convincing one: the universal destruction that follows on assuming God's non-existence.

For the Catholic, secured in his faith, this poses enviably few personal problems. It is a very different matter for those Protestants who consider the Reformation, or, if you wish, the situation it created, one of the greatest calamities in history, but one that, neither in whole nor in part, can be undone. Such a Protestant has difficulties in finding his religious home either in contemporary Protestantism, which in its disruption and lack of orientation is worse than ever before, or in contemporary, post-Reformation Catholicism. For his own part, he can only try, with whatever grace is allowed him, to re-assemble in himself the essential elements of pre-Reformation, undivided Christianity, and in this I think I am one of a company of men whose good will at least is beyond dispute. But it is a most difficult course and so far a lonely one, since there seems little present hope of establishing thus a religious community that goes much beyond a mutual respect for outward forms. If we have to content ourselves with this for the time being, it is more than ever our duty to work untiringly for our own recollection and to stir others from their indifference.

*Is much of the foreign aid program injurious to America and her allies?*

## *Foreign Aid Seen by a Foreigner*

M. A. THURN-VALSASSINA

DOES GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT economic-development aid give the average citizen of the recipient countries a better life?

Does this kind of aid make the world more stable and safe for the donor countries?

These are the questions we should ask ourselves whenever economic needs and aspirations from distant areas and people are brought to our attention. The general opinion in America seems to be that government-to-government aid is the answer. How — we are asked — can a big development loan fail to raise the standard of living of the masses in the recipient country? How can the improvement in the material conditions of life — more food, better housing and clothing — fail to influence the national character, to make people more peaceful and law-abiding? This is a reasoning easy to follow and to understand. To many the conclusions are clear. Others — and their number is growing — have serious doubts. Here I attempt

to subject the whole foreign aid theory to a critical analysis.

The term "foreign aid" is broad. Foreign aid can mean governmental guarantees to private investors, defense support, postwar reconstruction, flood and famine relief, grants for balancing national budgets, and many other things. For the purpose of this examination the use of the term is limited to continuous government-to-government contributions to economic development programs. No distinction will be made between grants, loans, and operations incorporating grant as well as loan features.

It is easier to understand the implication and repercussions of this type of foreign aid if one familiarizes oneself with the concept of *economic order*. Two basic forms of economic order may be distinguished: the "controlled" (or centrally administered) and the "free market" (or free enterprise) order. In the first form, what and how much is to be produced and imported is determined by central au-

thority; in the second, by the consumer (through the price mechanism). Power, influence, distinction are the rewards in the one case; profit after taxes in the other.

These two prototypes of economic order exist only as models. The type of order existing in any given country will inevitably be of a mixed variety, incorporating elements of both basic types. Even in Russia there is a free market for certain farm produce, whereas in the United States, whole segments of the economy are subject to controls of production and distribution. The important thing to know is which element predominates: the "government control" or the "free market," and *what the current trend is*.

The economic order covers only one aspect of human activities. There are others which require regulation. For that purpose political, legal, and social orders have been devised. Together with the economic order, they form the comprehensive framework within which human society develops.

There is a strong *interdependence* among the different orders governing human life. Some of these orders are in conflict with one another, others are complementary. A totalitarian political regime, for instance, will not join with a free-market economy or the "rule of law." A legal order providing for an independent judiciary, on the other hand, excludes totalitarianism as a public philosophy, as well as central controls as an economic principle. Finally, a centrally administered economy makes it difficult to maintain for any length of time constitutional government and legal protection of individual rights. Awareness of the interdependence of human orders is essential for the understanding of foreign aid and its implications.

The majority of the countries which have gained their independence since the last war have incorporated the political institutions of their former masters into

their national life. They have representative governments, parliaments, a free press, and the like. These, if nothing else, maintain certain ties with the West. At the same time, these institutions constitute a permanent source of discord with Russia. Both major powers are aware of this. The Americans are interested in maintaining and strengthening in the new countries American-type political forms and institutions (commonly known as democracy). The Russians, on the other hand, try to discredit them and have them replaced by those of their own creation.

Most of the new countries inherited (together with Western political and legal institutions) an economic order based on private ownership, free enterprise, and competition, with a fair amount of decentralization of economic decisions and financial power. The Russians know that if the economy is transformed into a controlled one, the Western political and legal institutions can be deprived of more and more of their meaning till one day they become obsolete.

There are two ways for transforming the economic order of a country: changing financial policies, and changing ownership relations.

Take a "free enterprise" economy. An economy of that type rests on two pillars: one is freedom of pricing and competition, the other private property. Without the support of these pillars, the order will collapse. There are two ways in which this collapse can be brought about. One is **deficit spending, the other nationalization.**

*Deficit spending* (the provision of capital through the printing press) increases demand for consumer goods without a corresponding increase of supply. Prices rise. The public, not aware of the men operating the printing press, hold tradesmen and manufacturers responsible. No government can ignore this. It will have to protect the public against "exploitation" by imposing price ceilings. This will soon be followed by rationing and allocations. In a year or two, little of what constitutes

a "free enterprise" economy will be left.

*Nationalization*, on the other hand, gives the government control of the means of production. It is unlikely that it will let the consumers determine how they are to be employed, how much and what type of merchandise is to be produced: for what, then, would be the object of nationalizing? It seems obvious that the government will use the powers that ownership gives to carry out its own designs. Djilas rightly asks in his *New Class* "how an economy can be administered other than by central planning, when it has or is going to have a single owner" (p. 114).

In the case of a centrally administered economy which is to be transformed into one of the "free enterprise" type, the reverse course would be followed. A balanced budget and restricted credit make quantitative controls ineffective even if they are not formally abolished (the Austrian experience during 1952 and 1953 is illustrative of this). Business restored to private ownership revives the spirit of private enterprise. "Wherever monopoly of ownership has been impossible," we read in Djilas' book, "freedom to some degree has become inevitable" (p. 65).

*How does "Foreign Aid" affect the economic order?*

This is the crucial point. To answer it we have to examine the impact of foreign aid on the monetary system and on ownership relations.

It must be recognized that the administrators of foreign aid programs are fully aware that dollar financing of development projects can create inflationary pressures. For this reason, contributions to such projects often are limited to the financing of import requirements and to the release of counterpart funds. This reduces, but does not eliminate, the inflationary danger. Every one of the major projects executed under a foreign-aid program requires a number of complementary investments which are not and cannot all be financially provided for. As the need for such invest-

ments becomes apparent, the foreign-aid-receiving country usually has no alternative to central-bank financing. The Austrian inflation of 1947-1951 was mainly due to this cause.

The main effect foreign aid has on economic order is through its impact on *ownership relations*. If the use of the aid funds is left to the authorities of the receiving countries, the money will go to the sector of the economy subject to the direct control of these authorities. This is the public sector. "Such property," Djilas says, "is legally considered social and national property, actually a single group manages it in its own interest" (p. 65).

With inflation and nationalization, the public sector in the aid-receiving countries will expand and the private one contract. If this trend is not arrested, the markets one day will become too small, and profit incentives too weak to support free enterprise. The transformation of the economic order will then have been completed. Already in 1957, C. Johnson writes in his report to the Foreign Relations Committee that, "There is [in Asian countries he visited] little or no encouragement for private enterprise. It is politically more popular to erect state-owned publicly administered monopolies which afford opportunities for patronage and special favors." (Committee Publication No. 7, March 1957.)

Americans appear just as concerned with the trend towards public ownership as with inflation. They may not be fully aware of the impact that these forces have on economic order. What they see, however, is the tremendous waste, the misdirection of resources, the corruption inherent in the system. For that reason they are reluctant to approve the use of foreign-aid funds for financing government projects outside what is generally accepted as the realm of state authority (public utilities, transportation, etc.). As for inflationary pressures, Americans often withhold releases of counterpart funds in an attempt to curb them.



Now, if this attitude prevailed, the reasoning behind it would be of little consequence: a 'no' to a request for assistance because of "mismanagement" or a 'no' because of effects on economic order amounts for practical purposes to the same thing. Unfortunately, the attitude does not prevail.

Before continuing with this presentation, we have to refer to a fundamental difference between the approach of the United States to development aid and the attitude of underdeveloped countries.

American foreign aid policies appear to be based on three assumptions. The first is that the economic potential these policies help new countries to create will be used for improving the standard of living of the masses; the second, that better living conditions (or an end to the grinding poverty in which most of the people in these areas live) will strengthen the internal stability and the spirit of independence of these countries; the third, that this will help American security. "Greater production," President Truman said in his inaugural address of 1949, "is the key to prosperity and peace."

It should be noted that this type of reasoning is peculiar to the United States. Europe may be just as conscious of the Russian threat. It may have just as much to lose if the underdeveloped countries fall under Russian domination. Yet, in Europe "economic development" has not aroused the big popular concern that exists in America.

The reason is *not* lack of money. There are countries like Switzerland which always were able to help, and others like Germany which have recently come into a position to contribute to the development of foreign economies on a non-commercial basis (grants, "soft" loans). The reason is not pettiness, either. The Swiss, for instance, on numerous occasions and at considerable sacrifice to themselves, have given other countries famine aid and flood-relief. Yet they have refused to participate in the type of continuous aid to economic

development which the Americans feel themselves committed to.

Occasional appeals for aid to underdeveloped countries from European statesmen should not mislead one. The motivations of these appeals differ. Some are ideological: such as enthusiasm for an economic order based on comprehensive development-planning and compulsory saving. Others are commercial, with prospects of bigger orders from aid-receiving countries, higher earnings and higher employment ratios in the national export industries. Whatever the reasoning, European appeals for economic aid to underdeveloped countries, apparently have one thing in common: the understanding that the American taxpayer, and the American taxpayer alone, will foot the bill.

To the rulers of some of the recipient countries, foreign aid means something entirely different to what it means to Americans. For them it is primarily an instrument for subjecting the productive forces of their countries to their political and ideological objectives. The great impression that economic development in Russia and China makes on them suggests that this assumption may be well founded. Better living conditions for the population and internal stability may well appear desirable. Planning for political power, however, must come first.

One can also put it thus: Whereas for Westerners economic development is closely related to individual wants such as food, clothes, housing, and transportation, for the Eastern countries such a relationship does not necessarily exist. For many of them, the capacity to launch sputniks indicates a higher standard of development than production of motorcars, television sets, and refrigerators.

The other day a friend of mine asked me whether I considered Russia an underdeveloped country. Without hesitation I said that I did. Prof. D., who was present, disagreed. "How can you say such a thing," he protested. "Would you call a hunk of a man standing in front of you, all



set to punch you in the nose, underdeveloped?"

"If this man makes just enough in ten hours of daily hard work," I replied, "to rent a bedroom and to buy staple foods and rough clothes to keep himself warm; and if he has little hope of ever obtaining any of the amenities of our civilization, such as iceboxes, bathrooms, and seaside vacations, I certainly would. Economically speaking, he is underdeveloped. Now, of course, if you consider the essence of economic development to be muscular strength, the capacity to throw your weight about in the street where you live, to intimidate your neighbors, then Russia is the most highly developed country in the world."

The assumptions on which Americans base economic development are open to serious questioning. For one thing, the economic potential created with the help of foreign aid does not *have* to be used to improve the living conditions of the people; for the other, such an improvement would not necessarily change jealous and power-hungry individuals into men of opposite character, or politically immature societies into mature ones. We have only to look at Russia to see that economic potential can be devoted to military power and prestige, rather than public welfare. Iraq and Egypt, on the other hand, show us political contentment is not just a function of real income. The per capita income in Iraq and Egypt is two to three times as high as in other Asian and African countries. (Egypt \$110; Iraq \$85; India \$54; Ethiopia \$50; Angola \$50.) P. T. Bauer is right when he says that "the character of a society is governed by its historical development, by natural and ethnic characteristics, by institutional arrangements, that is factors and influences other than the conventionally measured flow of goods and services."<sup>1</sup> It is, therefore, difficult to see how "environment conditioning" of the type practiced by foreign-aiders can accomplish what is intended.

So long as Americans believe in the validity of the assumptions underlying their

foreign-aid policies, therefore they will wish to get a maximum economic (as opposed to political or propaganda) effect out of a given sum of money. This is because only a real increase in productivity can bring the economic betterment from which they expect peaceful coexistence to flow. To ensure the maximum effect they attach conditions to the use of aid funds. Projects must be "economically justified." There must be bidding for contracts. Disbursements must be subject to control. Finally, the hope is expressed that some small part of the loan or grant proceeds be reserved to the ailing private sectors of the different economies. This is done not so much for ideological reasons as out of a feeling that private individuals are more rational in their use of scarce goods and services than government officials, and will accomplish more with a given sum of money than does the state.

The Cooley amendment provides that 25% of local currency loans under PL 480 shall go to private enterprise. Loans granted under this provision, however, have to be "mutually agreeable." The Development Loan Fund, it is hoped, will also "encourage private competitive business."

If all the rulers of the recipient countries had the same approach to economic development as do the Americans, they would welcome such conditions. As we have seen, they do not. Any form of control and supervision of aid-funds interferes with their natural desire to put these funds to a maximum political advantage to themselves. They will resent special requirements and limitations in the use of aid funds just as much as they resent the demand for political alignment, facilities for bases, and other political conditions. The State Department, anxious to avoid irritation and offense, therefore opposes such limitations. It tends to recommend the granting of aid on the most liberal terms possible. The Administration is said to be seeking a revision of the Cooley amendment for fiscal year 1960.

It is frequently argued that the Soviets

do not attach any conditions to the development aid they give. Those who demand similar restraint from the United States, however, do not realize how different the positions are in which the two powers find themselves. Every cent the Russians spend on development-aid goes into the public sector of the recipient economy. One hears that they ask for this. Even if they refrained from doing so, however,—and this is the crucial point—the rulers of the recipient countries would see to it that the money went—and stayed—there. Their own political interests require it. For America, the situation is entirely different. There a loan condition favoring private enterprise has to be *imposed* on an unwilling borrower.

With growth limited to the public sector, the economic order in the aid-receiving countries is bound to be affected. From a predominantly free-enterprise and private-ownership economy, there will gradually emerge a system of public ownership, comprehensive development-planning, and compulsive saving, very similar to the system existing in Russia. We have seen above that such a system is incompatible with Western-type political and legal institutions. Unless present policies are altered, these institutions will become progressively weaker. Their final collapse may mean the end of Western influence. So government-to-government development aid, while making excellent sense to Russia, can be most harmful to the West in general and America in particular. Instead of preventing communist penetration, through its effect on the economic, and thus on the social, political, and legal order, it can actually accelerate communist advances.

Not long ago I took part in a discussion of foreign aid. The American distributing agencies and their field representatives abroad came in for much criticism because of their passive acceptance of policies and procedures in recipient countries. Somebody objected to this criticism. "It is not the function of foreign representatives," he said, "to try to change the economic

system of the countries of their appointment to the likeness of their own."

"I go along with this," I said. "Desirable though such a change may, in some cases, appear, attempts to bring it about made by a foreigner will almost certainly end in failure. What we are witnessing now, however, is quite something else. It is the spectacle of Westerners transforming—through their lending and granting activities—the economic system of countries from something not unlike free enterprise to the exact *opposite*. That this is not done intentionally does not change the results."

The true nature of foreign development-aid is, fortunately, beginning to become apparent. If it were not for the fear that recipient countries would carry their needs (and sympathies) to Moscow, a sizable reduction, if not complete abandonment, of this type of aid might be feasible.

Why, we may ask ourselves, does the possibility of an increase in Russian aid exert such a deterrent influence? Are not requests for Russian aid being made continuously from all corners of the globe in spite of the large volume of American assistance? The Russians cannot possibly help every country at the same time. A suspension of American development aid is bound to reduce the total sum of foreign assistance received by any of the new countries. This will cause acute disappointment, to some even embarrassment. On the whole, however, the effects should be salutary. The consequences of mistaken policies, inefficiency, and corruption, hitherto concealed by such assistance, will be laid bare. Faced with a breakdown of national development plans, public opinion might be ready to consider a new approach to the problem of economic growth.

#### *An Alternative Method:*

Now I attempt to suggest a new basis for Western aid in the economic development of underdeveloped countries.

What underdeveloped countries need most is a legal and institutional framework for economic activity, a framework that

would release dormant creative forces at home, repatriate local capital from abroad, and attract new private foreign investments. Technical assistance to plan and enact this framework will have to come first. (Latin America is desperately in need of investment capital. Yet according to "Survey of Current Business" of the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, by the end of 1956 no less than \$560 million had been invested by Latin-Americans in U. S. industry; this figure does not include indirect investments through Swiss or British firms. Lack of capital is not, as many think, the cause of underdevelopment; rather, it is the consequence.)

Second in importance is the reduction of American import restrictions. The developing countries should be given better opportunities to *earn* some of the dollars they need for investment purposes. They should be given reasonable security that efforts to create a market for their products in America, and expenditure for that purpose, will not be lost through the use of escape-clauses in trade agreements. Part of the money the taxpayers save in foreign development-aid could be used by them to give some relief to American farmers and manufacturers who suffer hardship through increased imports.

One cannot expect immediate results from policies based on these principles. It might be years before the improved investment climate resulting from their implementation will attract an amount of private capital sufficient to ensure a satisfactory rate of economic growth. In the meantime, there may be a drop in investment activities. To prevent this drop from becoming extreme, the present narrow limits of credit-worthiness of the underdeveloped countries could be extended with government guarantees for private investments (as practiced under existing programs) and government guarantees for the obligations of international lending institutions (as enjoyed by the International Bank for

Reconstruction and Development bondholders.) One should, however, be under no illusion as to what can be accomplished by these methods alone. The space between political—"no private funds obtainable"—and commercial—"reasonable prospects of repayment"—loans is a very narrow one (official I.B.R.D. lending policies).

A program based on the above principles may not be acceptable to politicians in underdeveloped countries. Soft loans and grants—with the use of the proceeds left to their discretion—serve their purposes better. They have helped them to extend their power and influence in the past. They promise to do so in the future. On the other hand, the establishment of the legal, institutional, and moral foundations on which a modern industry can be built may well have the contrary effect.

Governments will object on the ground that the policies recommended to them are of "Western" inspiration. They will not want to re-admit "under the guise of assistance" what they have only recently thrown off. In this case one can only say that it is impossible to have the best of two worlds. Who closes his door to the *spirit* of the West must go without the material fruits of its civilization. Roepke puts his opinion on economic development in the new countries in the following words: "Modern industry of a higher level," he says, "will by its very nature be limited to the parts of the world where a man, who says 'tomorrow,' means the next day and not a vague future prospect."<sup>2</sup>

It is obviously impossible to help somebody against his own will. If the forms of development-aid suggested above are refused, the West will have to resign itself to the fact. It is not America, not Europe, but the underdeveloped countries who stand to lose most. Under no circumstances should the old foreign-aid policies be continued. Sums of money offered from one government to another on a do-with-it-what-you-like basis offer no lasting cure for economic ills. They only strengthen the position of governments and weaken the position and

the rights of the individuals in the recipient countries. The resulting inequalities may be of little concern to America. What the United States cannot remain indifferent to, however, is the emergence from such conditions of totalitarian regimes, dependent on Russia for support and inspiration.

Earlier in this essay, I mentioned a discussion on the degree of economic development reached by Russia. Somebody objected on that occasion to my calling Russia "underdeveloped." I said that if the standards for measuring economic development were muscular strength, if they were the capacity to throw one's weight around

and to threaten one's neighbors, then indeed, Russia would be the most highly developed country in the world. May I add in conclusion: If other countries want the same kind of development, that is their own business. There is nothing we can do to prevent it. But why on earth should we have to pay for it?

The Russian challenge in the field of economic development cannot be met with equal or greater aid of the same type. It requires a new approach.

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<sup>1</sup>*Economic Analysis and Policy in Underdeveloped Countries*, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>"Unterentwickelte Laender," *Ordo*, 1953, p. 88.

# Christian Corporatism

*The difference between Corporatism and Fascist schemes.*

ERNEST MORT

CORPORATISM IS A VALID TERM that is under a modern stigma. Too often the social philosophy of Corporatism has been associated with the ideology of the Fascist Corporative State, or the sad experiment of Vichy.

In a recent article entitled "Liberalism and Christianity," MODERN AGE, Fall 1957, Dr. Wilhelm Roepke made a brief reference to the subject of Corporatism as if it were synonymous with the Corporative State. While Dr. Roepke's article has many merits and is friendly to Catholic social thought, I feel that a further discussion and possible clarification of Corporatism is necessary.

In discussing the value of Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, Dr. Roepke concludes that Pius XI did not advocate Corporatism, since the encyclical explicitly states the unfavorable elements of the Corporative State. Dr. Roepke also argues that one can find neither the Latin term nor the concept of Corporatism in the encyclical's proposal of reform.

While I agree with Dr. Roepke's general observations on the Corporative State, still one must not equate Corporatism with the Corporative State. There is an important distinction that must be kept in mind, one made by an outstanding social philosopher, Father Von Nell-Breuning, S.J., a man of the intellectual climate of Pius XI. Nell-Breuning distinguishes the Corporative Society from the Corporative State.<sup>1</sup> Such a

distinction not only can clear up terminological misunderstandings, but clarifies further the nature of Corporatism as expressed in the Corporative Society. Once this distinction is appreciated, the obvious conclusion is that what the author of the encyclical is proposing is neither undemocratic nor incompatible with free enterprise and individual initiative. Rather, the principles of Pius XI offer a positive solution for many of the socio-economic problems menacing modern society.

In making the proper distinction, a study in brief detail must first be made of some of the principal features of the Fascist Corporative State. From 1930 to 1931, Mussolini began to outline the nature and function of the Corporative State, although it was not until 1934 that it was established by law. Under Mussolini, the syndicalist system evolved into the Corporative State. The intricate system of syndicates, federations, and confederations was linked together by twenty-two corporations embracing the key industries and professions. These twenty-two corporations were composed not only of the representatives of the respective syndicates of both employers and employees, but also of the officials of the Fascist Party. Over and above the corporations was the National Council of Corporations, of which Mussolini was president. In practice, the entire corporative and syndicalist system was infiltrated by the Fascists and was under the direct control of the State.

The general purpose of the corporations was to control production for national in-



terests. In practice, this meant proposing and fixing the prices of goods and wage standards, settling those labor disputes which had not been settled by the lower tribunals of the syndicates, and finally advising the government on all questions of economic interest.

Although Pius XI was aware of the immediate economic advantages of the syndicates and corporations, he objected to a situation in which there was complete domination of the economic life of the country by the State: "We feel bound to add that to our knowledge there are some who fear that the State is substituting itself in the place of private initiative, instead of limiting itself to necessary help and assistance. It is feared that the new syndical and corporative institution possesses an excessively bureaucratic and political character, . . . and that it risks serving particular political aims rather than contributing to the initiation of a better social order." (95).

Mussolini's idea was to make the Corporative State the end of all productive and social life; the State was to operate like a huge business corporation rather than a function of Society. Each individual was important in the corporative scheme insofar as he had an economic and social value, not to Society, but to the State. According to J. Messner, "The ideological basis of Fascist corporatism consists in the principle of the 'immanence of the state in the individual' and the 'identification of society with the state'."<sup>2</sup>

The fact that the Corporative State of the Fascists was primarily a political institution is what immediately separates it from the Corporative Society. Pius XI stresses the point that the Fascist corporations were not autonomous bodies, but were "... organs and institutions of the State . . ." The principle of subsidiarity which is essential to the notion of a Corporative Society was not to be found in the internal character of such corporations. For example, in the National Council of Corporations, the actual members of the

twenty-two corporations were only the representatives of the various branches of industry or the professions. The representatives who had precedence and control were the three members of the Fascist Party chosen by the secretary of the party, and then the representatives of employers and employees.

Thus in substituting itself for private initiative, the Corporative State violated the essential principles of subsidiarity and autonomy, attempting to secure of itself the entire economic and social welfare of the people. Instead of being a function of society, the Corporative State in fact became society in the social, economic, and political orders. This idea was once expressed by Mussolini as a kind of motto: "Everything in the State, nothing against the State, nothing outside the State."

The concept of the Corporative Society, as expressed in *Quadragesimo Anno*, is entirely different from the mechanistic plan of the Corporative State. The Corporative Society is based on the notion that society has an organic structure flowing from its nature and intrinsic unity. In social philosophy, this concept is known as the organological principle. Generally, when we hear the term "corporative," we think in reference to our modern machine-like corporations. But the term "corporative" as used in connection with social ethics refers to the organic nature of society. The word "corporative" comes from the Latin "corpus" which means body. When one speaks of society being corporative, one is comparing society to a living body. The human body is composed of a variety of organs, each performing a certain function in harmony and co-ordination with the other organs of the body. In a human body there is a true organic unity between the organs and members, although there is also a diversity of function. This corporative concept can be applied analogously to the social body. Just as there is a physical unity in the human organism, analogously there is a moral unity in the social organism. Corporatism helps to ex-



plain the inner principle of life and activity which the social body must have in directing its parts for the good of the whole.

Social Mechanism is opposed to any organic principle of unity. According to the mechanistic theories, society has only a figurative meaning; it is a collection of individuals organized in some artificial way. In opposition to mechanism, Pius XII said in his Christmas message for 1944, "The State is not a distinct entity which mechanically gathers together a shapeless mass of individuals and confines them within a specified territory. It is and should be in practice the organic and organizing unity of real people." A mechanistic society is a class society lacking this inner unity, since the only unity that mechanism has comes extrinsically from the State.

In the Corporative Society, the State is a civil society whose purpose is to promote the common temporal welfare of its citizens. But the State is not the only society. Besides all the necessary societies, men may belong to many different voluntary or quasi-public societies. Furthermore, in the Corporative Society, the State must always be guided by the two correlative principles of the Common Good and Subsidiarity, so that the rights and ends of the lesser or equal societies are able to be properly attained and secured. The principle of subsidiarity, which Pius XI expresses so clearly in *Quadragesimo Anno*, is that the State should not do those things in the temporal order which lesser societies can do for themselves:

Just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise and industry can accomplish, so, too, it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order, for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies. This is a fundamental principle of social

philosophy . . . . Of its very nature the true aim of all social activity should be to help individual members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them. (79)

The State in a Corporative Society, then, must achieve the proper balance between the principle of the common good and the principle of subsidiarity. When Doctor Roepke referred to the Corporative State and said it was undemocratic, he was correct. But this cannot be said of the Corporative Society, because the principle of subsidiarity preserves the freedom of lower social groups in the social, economic, and political orders.

In the Corporative Society, men would not be grouped solely according to mutually exclusive classes, but rather re-grouped according to their natural socio-economic function in society. As the encyclical explains, ". . . there cannot be question of any perfect cure, except this opposition be done away with, and well ordered members of the social body come into being anew, vocational groups namely, binding men together not according to the position they occupy in the labor market, but according to the diverse functions which they exercise in society" (83).

The corporative concept of society is not something new in social philosophy. One of the most characteristic elements of the guild system was the functional organic principle. The guilds were public social groups of men who were united in the same profession or trade. Management and labor were united to perform a certain function in society so that there existed an occupational bond between the master, journeyman, and apprentice of each guild. While Pius XI does not advocate any return to the guild system, he does stress the important social principles involved, the functional or organological principle which is needed for our modern society: ". . . because on account of the evil of Individualism, as We called it, things have come to such a pass that the highly developed

social life which once flourished in a variety of prosperous institutions organically linked with each other, has been damaged and all but ruined, leaving thus virtually only individuals and the State. Social life lost entirely its organic form." (78).

Pius XI carefully avoids presenting any pre-conceived plan for achieving the Corporative Society. He specifically states that the principles for any concrete plan of reform must be "adapted to different places and circumstances." In other words, it is up to the economists and sociologists of individual countries to present for consideration an adaptable plan informed by the principles of a true Corporative Society.

Pius XI does propose for consideration the establishment of a new socio-economic institution for society which he called an "order," as Dr. Roepke says. Such an institution would provide not only for the individual good of the members, but primarily for the common good of society. The Pope explains that those who are engaged in the same trade or profession will form a new association characterized by the common effort of employers and employees. "... true and genuine social order demands various members of society, joined together by a common bond. Such a bond of union is provided on the one hand by the common effort of employers and employees of one and the same group joining forces to produce goods or give services; on the other hand, by the common good which all groups should unite to promote, each in its own sphere, with friendly harmony." (84). This means that over and above the private associations of management and labor, there still remains the need of some kind of public association in which representatives of management and labor can collaborate not only for their own interests but primarily for the interests of the common good of society.

Dr. Roepke implies in his article that nowhere in *Quadragesimo Anno* can one either find the term or the concept of Corporatism. And the terminology of *Quad-*

*ragesimo Anno* does present a difficulty in this regard. When Pius XI comes to giving a name to the new socio-economic institution, he does not use the term "corporation," but coins a new word, "ordines." Various equivalents have been proposed as translations for the word; from time to time the term "vocational groups," "occupational groups," "corporative groups," or the literal word "order" have been used. Here in America we use the term "Industry Council."

When one reads the section of the encyclical entitled *Reconstruction of the Social Order*, the reason for the Pope's Latin terminology of "ordines" becomes more apparent. He is concerned with a re-ordering of society. In defining the nature of the social order, Pius XI makes use of the definition attributed to Thomas Aquinas on order, "unity in well-arranged multiplicity." The word "order" has a special significance in the encyclical. It is also probable that Pius XI coined a new word so that no one could claim an identification with a political system. But in reference to a socio-economic system of reform, Pius XI does explicitly use the term "corporative" in some of his other writings.<sup>3</sup> The most notable use of the term is in *Atheistic Communism*, where Pius XI refers to what he had proposed in *Quadragesimo Anno*, and uses the word "corporative" in the sense of a system to explain the concept of a Christian Corporatism.<sup>4</sup>

In order to understand why the Fascist Corporative States lacked the principles of autonomy and subsidiarity which are essential in the Corporative Society, we should briefly consider the sociological theory of Universalism as proposed by Othmar Spann. Universalism stands diametrically opposed to the philosophy of the Corporative Society. As a motivating theory behind the Fascist ideology, Universalism begins with the individual as a relative part of society. Although Spann began with the individual, rights did not come from the individual, but from the "totality" which was Spann's concept of society. Spann af-

firms that "it is the fundamental truth of all social science . . . that not the individuals are the truly real, but the whole, and that the individuals have reality and existence only so far as they are members of the whole."<sup>5</sup> For Spann, society was co-terminus with the State, and from the State flowed the rights of the individual, the family, the syndicates, even religion. According to Spann, the individual exists for the sake of society, not society for the sake of the individual. It logically followed that the entire social, economic, and political life of society emanated from the State. Thus in its identification of Society with the State, and the immanence of the State in the individual, Universalism helped to form the ideological basis for the Corporative State.<sup>6</sup>

In contradistinction to the theory of Universalism, Christian Corporatism explains that in the Corporative Society, the individual is conceived as a social being by nature, who has an eternal destiny. Society is not just a collection of individuals; it is a moral union of men which has the common good as its goal. Because of his God-given natural rights, the individual creates the moral entity of society. Therefore, according to Christian Corporatism, the individual does not exist for the sake of society; but society exists for the sake of the individual.

In the Corporative Society, the economic function of the State is derived from the principle of the common good. The State has the maximum economic welfare of society as one of its ends. The authority which the State has in the economic order must be considered in both its negative and positive aspects. Negatively, the State has the right and duty to intervene when any economic situation threatens the common good. But as Leo XIII says, "The State must not undertake more nor go further than is required for the remedy of the evil or the removal of danger." In the Corporative Society, the State would not only have to be guided by the principle

of the common good, but also by the correlative principle of subsidiarity. Positively, by its social legislation and in other ways, the State would provide the necessary conditions so that the subsidiary groups would achieve their proper ends by an organic reform instead of a state reform. Fr. John Cronin says, with respect to positive legislation, ". . . the State would be restored to its true and rightful position as the supreme guardian of the common good, aiding and stimulating lesser groups rather than absorbing them, and contributing to a maximum of individual freedom and national well-being."<sup>7</sup>

These then are, in summary fashion, some of the principal elements of a Corporative Society and what distinguishes it from the Corporative State.

<sup>5</sup>Here I refer to Oswald Von Nell-Breuning's commentary on "Quadragesimo Anno," *Reorganization of Social Economy* (New York: Bruce Publishing Co., 1936), especially pages 210-241. Mention should also be made of the works of Charles Bruehl, *The Pope's Plan for Social Reconstruction*, and Joaquin Azpiazu, *The Corporative State*.

<sup>6</sup>J. Messner, *Social Ethics* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1949). Of special interest is his treatment of Fascism and also the distinction between Modern Corporatism and the Fascist concept. Mention should also be made of Raymond J. Miller's excellent book *Forty Years After: Pius XI and the Social Order*.

<sup>7</sup>The Latin text of *Quadragesimo Anno* designates the subsidiary groups as "ordines" (81), and also as "collegia" or "corpora" (86). The Code of Social Principles uses the term "corporative organization" in n. 64, 65.

<sup>8</sup>In *Atheistic Communism*, the Latin text reads ". . . quae corporatorum hominum collegia dicebantur. . ." (93). In this context Pius XI is making reference to what he proposed in *Quadragesimo Anno*. Translators thus use "corporative system." For the Latin text, see *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 29:65-106. The basic English translation for *Quadragesimo Anno* And *Atheistic Communism* can be found in either Nell-Breuning's commentary, or the Paulist Press Pamphlet *Five Great Encyclicals*.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in J. Messner, p. 562. Besides Messner, Azpiazu has a good treatment of Othmar Spann and the theory of Universalism.

<sup>10</sup>John F. Cronin, S.S., *Catholic Social Principles* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1950), p. 537.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

# Catholics and the Market Economy: Part One

DANIEL VILLEY

*For the first time, an English translation of M. Villey's important essay. This article will be concluded in our Fall 1959 issue.\**

## I

A CURSORY EXAMINATION of the relationships between economic liberalism and Roman Catholicism reveals a striking paradox. On the one hand, the majority of Catholic voters in almost every Western European country have supported conservative parties which are either explicitly or practically liberal (in the Continental sense) in economic matters. Moreover, the two countries in which parties of predominantly Catholic complexion have been in power in the post-war period, namely, Germany and Italy, are the very countries in which the program of orthodox economic liberalism has been most determinedly and successfully applied. On the other hand, most Catholic theologians and economists repudiate economic liberalism, not infrequently in the name of their faith. Judging from the contemporary scene, there appears to be a wide gap between Catholic theory and Catholic practice in the realm of economics.

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Catholic social thinkers are supporters of the most varied economic systems, including corporatism (which claims to base itself on the papal encyclicals), solidarism, cooperativism, and trade unionism (the ideology on which George Bidault's Popular Republican Movement was based). In addition, there are many Catholic groups, especially in France, which are strongly attracted to Marxism of the Communist variety. But those Catholic economists who profess liberalism or who are in fact liberal can be counted on one's fingers. The Mont Pelerin Society takes its liberalism (and the respect for personal privacy which it implies) far too seriously to issue statistics on the religious beliefs of its members, and yet I doubt whether it includes many believing Catholics. Furthermore, the few Catholics who are liberal avoid bringing the Church into their economic opinions, whereas their less scrupulous antiliberal Catholic opponents are ready with anathema as the occasion requires. From all of this, the impression is gained that economic liberalism is utterly opposed to Catholicism, that it is a heresy condemned by the Church.

My friend and colleague Professor Wilhelm Roepke recently put the question to me: "Must one then be an agnostic in order to be a liberal economist?" I shall try,



in the paragraphs that follow, to answer this question. The difficulty which confronts one in such an undertaking is that very few non-Catholics are able or competent to understand what Catholicism is, for it is the special characteristic of a religion that it can be fully comprehended only by its practitioners. Conversely, very few Catholic theologians really know what economic liberalism is or are acquainted with the way in which the market economy functions.

Still another difficulty is traceable to the fact that the problem assumes different forms in different countries. I beg my readers' indulgence if it is found that I have confined myself unduly to the situation in France. But my arguments should be somewhat freer of error, it seems to me, if I choose my illustrations from the area which I know best. In the second place, France happens to provide a particularly instructive terrain with respect to the problem which is here being considered. For it is in France as a Catholic country that the opposition between liberalism and Catholic thought comes into sharpest focus, so much so that an important segment of Catholic thought has been drawn increasingly into the wake of the Marxist ideology. Lastly, it is in France that Catholic economists display—as Catholics—the most intense antipathy to the liberal point of view.<sup>1</sup>

I shall divide my inquiry into two parts. In the first, which is primarily addressed to non-Catholics, I shall try to consider the question of why Catholics are mostly anti-liberal and to weigh the value of the theological arguments which they invoke in defense of their position. In the second part, I shall attempt to show Catholics how they can be liberals in the realm of economics without doing violence to their faith.

But first, I should like to make three observations aimed at defining and clarifying the nature of the problem.

*First observation:* Catholicism is not an economic theory; it is a religion. A Catho-

lic is a person who prays, who confesses his sins to the priest in order that the latter may remit them in the name of God; he is a person who receives the Holy Eucharist, who believes that the Holy Spirit is present in the Roman Church, and who expects the Kingdom of God. Catholic doctrine teaches the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Real Presence, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Its object is the mystery of the relationships of man with God, not his dealings with society. To study religion while abstracting from that which makes it religious (as the nineteenth century did from the theocrats to the school of Durkheim) is to preclude the possibility of understanding it. Confronted with religion, the sociologist pure and simple is like a deaf man watching a dance.

Christianity, moreover, is a transcendental religion. It teaches the autonomy of the spiritual life vis-à-vis the temporal order and the data of history. There are theocratic religions whose prophets are simultaneously lawgivers. In Judaism and in Mohammedanism, religious dogma encompasses the domains of law and of morals. In these cases, social, juridical, and economic structures are outgrowths of revelation. Thus, it was possible to speak of a specifically Jewish economic doctrine. But such a conception is alien to the mission of Christianity. If the Gospels are truly something "new" in contrast to the Old Testament which they fulfill, then this newness consists primarily in a decisive rejection of the temporal and worldly kingdom of Jewish belief. The Jews expected the coming of a Messiah who would restore the power of Israel. But Christ fulfills His mission through His death on the Cross. The object of the Christian message is the salvation of souls, not the re-organization of society.

Jesus did not teach us how to amass wealth on earth. He did not come to save this world (*non pro mundo rogo*<sup>2</sup>), but to save us from it. There is not a single word in the New Testament which even inferen-

tially suggests that society should be organized one way rather than another. Social organizations, of whatever kind, appear in the Gospels as neutral data which the Church must take into account in garnering her harvest of souls and which man must deal with on the road to salvation. Those seeking answers to problems in the social order will not find them in Christian revelation. The non-competency of Christianity in these matters is expressed in the phrase: Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Christianity provides no social recipe. Consequently, the Christian ought to have no preconceived opinions regarding political and economic problems. Far from being specially equipped in this area, he suffers from the peculiar handicap of knowing the gulf that separates the trivia of this world from the goods of eternity.

For this reason, it is not our concern to contrast liberal economic doctrines with a supposed Christian economic theory, for such a theory does not exist. Our task is of another sort. We must examine the relationships between two levels of thought and of action which are completely foreign to one another and one of which transcends the other. To question a theologian about economics is just as droll as it would be to consult a poet on a problem in mathematics. This is the most serious difficulty with which I shall have to struggle in the present essay. But it is also a source of hope. For there is little likelihood that Christianity will be found to be *completely* incompatible with any given economic system. Since Christianity and economics are situated existentially on different levels, a number of different economic systems could conceivably be elaborated in the light of Christian faith and animated by the Christian spirit.

*Second observation:* Up to now I have spoken of Christianity. But Professor Roepke's question related to Catholicism. It is necessary to understand how these two things coincide for Catholics. The Roman Church is not in Catholic eyes just one

Christian sect among others. It is not the lead column, as it were, whose principal function is to serve as a point of orientation for the others. It is not the trunk of the Christian tree; it is the tree itself in its entirety. Catholicism is not an extreme form of Christianity. It is rather the only absolutely authentic form of Christianity, for it is complete Christianity.

It follows that in the eyes of Catholics every deviation from Roman dogma is also a betrayal of Christianity. But the reciprocal of this is equally true: one cannot denature or dilute the Christian spirit without simultaneously falsifying Catholicism. On the one hand, the authority of the Church is the yardstick for the interpretation of the Scriptures. On the other, the acts of the Roman Church must themselves be understood in terms of the Scriptures and of the entire Christian tradition. The identity of Christianity and Roman dogma means that they reciprocally verify, guarantee, and elucidate each other. Revelation is, of course, finished and henceforth mute, whereas the Roman Church continues to answer the questions put to her and in so doing continuously reinterprets Christian doctrine. For everything which is true must find its place in the universe of Catholic thought.

One of the consequences of the dogmatic universalism of Catholicism is that it is probably much easier to be a Protestant theologian than a Catholic theologian. The heretic makes a choice, as the etymology of the word suggests. Heresy consists in constructing a logically coherent system and then rejecting what refuses to be included in the system. Catholicism, on the contrary, makes no choice. Nothing is more diffuse and contradictory, at first view, than Catholic theology. For this theology may not neglect any particle, any aspect of truth. Catholic theology is—despite certain prejudices to the contrary—less logically coordinated and much less exclusive than any Protestant theology. Everything which is true is also Catholic, although that which is true in the domain of reli-



gion is not always easily harmonized with truth in the domain of purely secular thought.

The Catholic theologian must construct many theses which seem logically contradictory (e.g., one should love his parents and yet hate them, or the grace given to each person is sufficient but not always efficacious), theses which are harmonized only in the mystery of transcendent faith. Protestant theology is in very many ways understandable to the unaided reason. But Catholic theology first becomes clear through prayer. It plunges into the universe of mystery. To him who does not pray, it must appear absurd. Whoever regards it as a simple intellectual construction sees only the surface. He lacks the key and is caught in a web of contradictions. Pascal declared of the spirit who was searching for God, that he had already found Him. But the *fides quaerens intellectum* is never wholly successful at discovering faith. Faith cannot be accommodated within the confines of the intellect, for these are too narrow for it. This is why it is so difficult to comprehend Catholic theology at a level which would permit of its confrontation with economic liberalism. But this is also one of the reasons which entitle us *a priori* to assume that they are not mutually exclusive.

*Third observation:* Our third observation is of an historical nature and will perhaps serve to expose the psychoanalytical grounds of Catholic anti-capitalism. The essence of Catholicism lies in its universalism and in its timelessness. But it suffered a series of painful shocks beginning with the schism of the Eastern Church in the eleventh century and culminating in the Western Reformation in the sixteenth century. From these shocks, the Catholic Church has not yet fully recovered. The physical body of the Church has undergone grievous amputations. It has reacted to this in a thoroughly natural and healthy way by protecting and strengthening those elements of its tradition which were attacked and repudiated by the Reformers.

The Reformation unleashed a process which Bergson has described as a "processus de double frénésie" in which Protestantism and Catholicism have served each other as buffers. As Catholicism purged itself of simony and that decay of morals in the monasteries which had helped to foment the Protestant revolt, it gave all the greater emphasis to the dogmas and liturgical practices which Protestantism had rejected. So the impression has occasionally been created that the letter of the dogma is more important than its spirit. The Church's teaching has seemed to shrink to a "hierarchy" and the sacramental theology to confer an almost magic significance to the doctrine of *ex opere operato*.<sup>4</sup> Morality has tended to take on an excessively legalistic tone and the preoccupation with Mary and the Marian observances seems to many outside the Church to be not far from idolatry. But we must remember the shock which Luther and Calvin delivered to Catholic equilibrium. A man who has lost his left leg supports himself on the right. The sorest wound which the Reformation inflicted on the Church was not so much that it robbed the Church of some of its members, but that it produced intellectual aberrations in the members who remained. Since Luther's day and the Council of Trent, the Catholic pendulum has swung so far to the other side as to constitute a kind of Protestantism in reverse. This is a tendency which, when erected into a theological system,<sup>5</sup> can prove to be just as heretical as its opposite. The Counter-reformation was an historically natural and in many ways salutary movement. But it is a phenomenon which to some extent has had a deforming influence on Catholic thought. This is clearly seen in the attitudes of the Roman Church in the modern era, particularly during the second half of the nineteenth century under the reign of Pope Pius IX.

Almost simultaneously with the Reformation, the Renaissance begins and with it the civilization which we call "modern." This civilization grew to maturity largely

outside of the Church and, indeed, in opposition to it. If the Renaissance was Catholic in the case of Erasmus, this was an exception; its sources have been more often Protestant and even atheistic. As far as traditional Catholic thought was concerned, the Renaissance represented a sudden upheaval whose extent and violence it is difficult to imagine at this far remove. The Catholic Church, of course, was not bound in any essential way to the philosophy of Aristotle, nor to the cosmology of Ptolemy, still less to the Holy Roman Empire, neither did it require as an indispensable institutional adjunct a "primary"<sup>6</sup> (chiefly agrarian) culture, or a stationary economy, or feudalism. Consequently, the Church was not fated to succumb—as all these things did—to modernism, to Cartesianism, to the rebirth of mathematics, to the coming of the natural sciences, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the German philosophy of the nineteenth century. As it happened, however, the purely profane innovations of the modern era, whether scientific, political, or cultural, were accomplished in inextricable association with the irruptions of modern paganism and atheism. The irresistible advance of these movements posed a threat not only to the Christian religion but to the temporal framework in which it had flourished since the time of Constantine and the Popes of the Middle Ages. The Church reacted by closing herself off against all innovation.<sup>7</sup> She saw herself compelled to adopt a hard policy, to exact a severer discipline much in the manner of a captain whose ship is shaken by a tempest. And there is much truth in the contention that if Rome had not proceeded in this energetic fashion, Christianity might not have survived the crisis of the sixteenth nor that of the eighteenth centuries.

In any event, the conflict between the Church and modern civilization continued throughout the nineteenth century and is even today only superficially dissipated. The Church is uneasy in the modern world; its attitude towards that world is

still marked by deep distrust, even hostility. In the nineteenth century, the movement known as "Catholic liberalism" (1830-1870) was repeatedly attacked by the Church with a vehemence which in retrospect seems excessive. The Encyclical *Mirari vos* of 1832 in which Pope Gregory XVI condemned *l'Avenir* of Lamennais because of its "indifferentism," and the *Syllabus* of December, 1864 (whose promulgation in the French churches was forbidden by Napoleon III) were typical of the Church's profound mistrust of "modern ideas." The Church was clinging to the past to the point where even the most harmless innovations were viewed with suspicion and intransigence. If this mistrust is less marked today (and less consciously cultivated), it is by no means dead. The Catholic mind tends to think in categories of the pre-Columbian, pre-Copernican, pre-Baconian, pre-Cartesian era; it exhibits a nostalgia for the pre-Revolutionary period in matters political and philosophical, and for the pre-capitalist period in matters economic. The obscure regions of Catholic thought conceal a hope for future revenge against the Renaissance. Though it is never made explicit, there is an undercurrent of the Catholic mind which breathes easier each time modern civilization appears in imminent danger of succumbing to a fatal crisis. In reality, it is Catholic thought which has been in crisis since the beginning of the modern era. As early as 1870, Dupont-White wrote (I quote from memory) that in those cases where the clergy is susceptible to modern ideas, it inclines more to socialism than to free enterprise. For socialism contains elements which are reminiscent of a pre-capitalist order. As nonsensical as this may appear and in truth is, it explains much of the attraction which Communism exercises today for a very large segment of French Catholic public opinion. But whether Catholic thought inclines to the feudal past or to some hypothetical collectivist future, it always appears eager to evade the present, *i.e.*, the civilization which the Renaissance has be-

queathed to us.

In sum, Catholic tradition has not yet entirely digested the last four centuries of European intellectual history. Four centuries mean little to the Roman Church which thinks in terms of eternity and which above all seeks to maintain the integrity of religious truth. But this is a long time for Western man, for these four centuries have established the pattern of his thought, his civilization, his political and social systems. And it is only through these instrumentalities that he has received the heritage of the previous centuries. No one can deny the useful work performed by Catholic intellectuals in their fight against those forces which threatened religion and the culture in which it was embedded. But where Catholic thought has sulked in the corner and rejected modern civilization even in those cases where it is naturally good, the results have been distressing in the extreme.<sup>8</sup> It might prove a very rewarding task for the Catholic intellectuals of our time to try wherever possible to assimilate the values of modern civilization to the Christian tradition and, in a loyally Catholic manner, to baptize the Renaissance and the French Revolution. But the accomplishment of this task lies still before us. Catholic thought has adopted the intellectual categories and the terminology of the modern world for the most part only superficially. Contemporary Catholicism cannot be understood unless this fact is kept in mind. In it lies the explanation of many of the prejudices which Catholics display towards the market economy and which we must now endeavor to analyze.

## II

The unsympathetic and sometimes actively hostile attitudes of Catholics towards economic liberalism may be traced to four different sources: (A) ignorance of the way in which the market functions; and then three currents of Catholic thought which I shall designate as (B) integrism, (C) moralism, and (D) "prophetism." In each of these four cases I shall try to estab-

lish to what extent the antiliberal preconceptions of Catholic thinkers reflect a fundamental incompatibility between Catholicism and economic liberalism, and to what extent they derive from points of view which are not essential to Catholicism, indeed misrepresent it.

### A. Ignorance of the Market Mechanism

Catholic prejudice with respect to the doctrines of economic liberalism is traceable in the first instance to the general ignorance of economics. As paradoxical and even scandalous as it might seem, there are proportionately more educated men today who are unacquainted with the laws of the market than in the nineteenth century. In our day, it is considered everybody's privilege to discuss and to pass judgment on economic matters, regardless of whether he has even the minimal knowledge of the price system which college sophomores are supposed to possess. To make matters worse, contemporary programs of instruction in elementary economics are so overburdened with institutional material that what was formerly the core of an economics course has been submerged in all sorts of information of secondary importance.

Quesnay's *Heureka* constitutes the foundation of economic liberalism; it was a discovery whose historical importance was judged by the Physiocrats to be on a level with that of the printing press. It is the idea that economic phenomena cause and are caused by one another, that innumerable, apparently unrelated and autonomous decisions are in reality coordinated by powerful underlying mechanisms, so that all economic processes are explicable in terms of a specific economic order. It is the idea that beyond the level of intentions there is a level of consequences and that the latter is largely independent of the former. It is the idea that behind visible competition and the visible conflict of interests, there is a harmony which is not seen, but which science can discover. Economic science owes much to Quesnay's inspired vision,

for if that "which one sees" constituted the whole of economic life, it would not be necessary to superimpose on such common, everyday knowledge an additional body of scientific knowledge. To those ignorant of the latter, the doctrines of economic liberalism must remain forever a closed book. Obviously, "laissez faire" would be absurd if there were no mechanism to coordinate the isolated decisions of individuals and if behind the *mêlée* of conflicting competitive interests there were not some mediating harmony. But this point has been altogether missed by many of our contemporaries. Their thinking, which they are pleased to consider very modern, is in reality pre-physiocratic. They are imprisoned on the plane of "what one sees;" consequently, they remain unaware even of the existence of another plane of reality. They have spared themselves the effort required to understand liberalism so that it costs them but little effort to refute it. But for this very reason, their refutation is wide of the mark.

The opponents of the market economy have made great use of the weapon of contempt. And while contempt has not succeeded in killing the market, it has claimed many victims in the immediate vicinity thereof. The weapon has been employed by Catholics perhaps more than by others. Economic science has little attraction for them. Its laws have been established almost without exception by unbelievers. The only great economist who was a Christian was Malthus, but he was a heretic. It is repugnant to many Catholics to regard economic phenomena, which also may be regarded as the sum of human actions in the economic sphere, from the angle of determinism. There are a few Catholic economists, of course. But it is seldom that Catholic opinion in matters economic is shaped by Catholic economists. Much more influential in this field are the Catholic dilettantes, journalists, philosophers, and theologians. Thus far, no liberal economist of any stature has succeeded in making Catholics feel at home in the intellectual world of

economic liberalism. Catholic liberals of the school of Lamennais and Montalembert preached political liberalism almost exclusively; and one of them, Lacordaire, coined the following phrase so often brandished at the liberal economy: "Between the poor and the rich, it is liberty which oppresses, and the law which liberates."

In France, social Catholicism was born as a reaction against liberal Catholicism (this was not so much the case in Germany where both movements could claim Bishop Ketteler as a common font of inspiration). The President of the Union of Catholic Workingmen's Associations was Msgr. de Ségur, a declared enemy of liberalism. And the work of the *Cercles catholiques ouvriers* (begun in the year 1871 by de Mun and La Tour du Pin) was based almost wholly on the *Syllabus* of 1864. The *Cercles* sought to remake society on the basis of religious principles alone, with no concession whatever to the modern spirit and in opposition to the principles of the Revolution. De Mun's express proposal was "the counter-revolution through the *Syllabus*." Some part of the ideological current which nourished social Catholicism in nineteenth century France undoubtedly survives in the subconscious minds of the present generation.

Frequently to be met with is the type of Catholic intellectual who, while not professionally concerned with economics, is nonetheless interested in it and may even have a small library on the subject, usually of rather bizarre composition. He owns the collected works of Thomas Aquinas and everything Marx wrote. But it is seldom that he has read Adam Smith or Bastiat or even Keynes (who must be quite unintelligible to someone unacquainted with the classical economists). Often, such an intellectual's knowledge of liberal economics is confined to what he has read of it in the theological polemics of the nineteenth century (which were concerned much more with political, philosophical, and theological liberalism than with economic liberalism) and in the Marxist literature.



From these sources he learns that economic liberalism is *passé*, a fact which he appears to find reassuring.

Such types are often neither amateurs nor second-rate intellectuals. Emmanuel Mounier, for example, was a man with an exceedingly broad range of interests who combined a wonderfully pure and generous temperament with an unusual receptivity to new ideas and new insights. He was one of the first at the onset of the Great Depression to grasp intuitively the "crisis of our time" and to have the courage to encompass the whole evil of the age in one tragic vision. Though he died almost a decade ago, his influence on youth in France and abroad continues to grow. Mounier was a philosopher by training. Under the influence of Jacques Maritain, he concerned himself a great deal with Thomism, and this is reflected in his essay "*La propriété capitaliste et la propriété humaine*,"<sup>9</sup> in my opinion, a curious example of sociological archaism on the part of one of the most daring and pathbreaking thinkers of our generation. Subsequently, he devoted much serious study to Karl Marx, whose *Deutsche Ideologie* lay open on his table the night of his death (March, 1950). I do not believe Mounier ever seriously studied the laws of the market. In his eyes, liberal economic theory probably did not amount to more than a simple outgrowth of utilitarianism and Benthamite hedonism. The undeniable philosophical shortcomings of these systems were doubtless sufficient to cause Mounier to reject out of hand the economic theories which were presumably derived from them.

The ignorance of economic inter-relationships is frequently apparent in bishops' pastoral letters and other clerical pronouncements. If I may take the liberty—in a spirit of deep respect for the authorities from whom they emanate and for the motives which dictated them—I should like to quote here two random texts which caught my attention. A recent pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Rouen declares: "Wage earners who accept overtime work

should ask themselves if they are not thereby doing an injustice to their fellow workers. Certain women, whose husbands are providing for them decently and who only work in order to live more comfortably, certain pensioners who are adding a wage to a decent pension, should ask themselves if they are not unjustifiably taking work away from others whose needs are greater than theirs."<sup>10</sup>

This is an entreaty which must seem unexceptionable to those who are content to remain on the level of "what one sees", i.e., on the level of everyday knowledge. It is based on the same argument which labor unions use in a depression to justify their demands for restrictions on immigration or the expulsion of foreign labor. Wilhelm Roepke has exposed the underlying sophistry of this reasoning which he describes as the "lump of labor fallacy."<sup>11</sup> In the short run and in certain special cases which can be defined with some exactitude, it is conceivable that the hiring of one man may result in the firing of another. But if we think in terms of the long run and of a larger segment of the economy, we find that this cause and effect sequence is often only an optical illusion. In fact, working overtime hours may be the best means available to each of us to contribute to the reduction of unemployment. If the lady members of the Archdiocese of Rouen stopped working, would they not also have to reduce their purchases of commodities by as much? And would they not thereby increase the danger of unemployment for those whose work is complementary to their own? The ill repute in which liberalism stands today serves as a pretext to rehabilitate "popular" as opposed to scientific economics. This results in economic data being regarded solely in the light of "what one sees" to the disregard or denial of "what one does not see."

In an official letter of His Eminence, Cardinal Saliège, Archbishop of Toulouse, to all churches in his Archdiocese, we find the following passage: "I entreat the leaders of business not to increase the number



of the unemployed. It is not necessary for a business to make profits. It is necessary that it exist and that it provide people with the wherewithal to live." But if precisely as a result of not reducing the number of its employees (though such action is indicated), a firm were to jeopardize its own existence and thereby cause a further increase of unemployment throughout the economy owing to irrational use of the factors of production, and if all this resulted in still more men having less of the "wherewithal to live," what then? The question was not raised because the problem simply was not seen. To be sure, a pastoral letter is not intended to be a treatise in economics. But advice of this sort ought not to be given without taking into account the economic consequences which would result were it to be acted on. And what if it is the very essence of the entrepreneur's job to make profits? Then one could not write "it is not necessary for a business to make profits" no more than one could say "it is not necessary for a professor to give courses, he need only buy books," or "it is not necessary for a doctor to take care of the sick, he need only take care of his wife," etc. In the pursuit of profit is seen only the (guilty) desire for gain. Profit is not seen for what it really is in the competitive market economy: the barometer of service rendered. But ignorance or misunderstanding of economics is fatal to the liberal doctrine. Economic liberalism must be nonsense to him who does not know that economic interrelationships exist, or who denies that they exist. It may be questioned whether the market economy is justified by economic science. But by the same token, the market cannot be justified *except* in the light of science. Whosoever remains on the level of "what one sees" must remain blissfully unaware of "the case for liberalism."

### B. *Integritism*

Ignorance is the twin sister of mistrust. We instinctively fear what we do not know and we prefer to remain in ignorance of

what makes us afraid. If Catholic thought deliberately holds aloof from the market economy and from the body of economic principles on which it rests, it is because it mistrusts economic liberalism. Catholics are suspicious of liberalism because the word evokes such associated ideas as private interpretation of the Scriptures, religious indifferentism, skepticism, and rejection of the principle of authority in religious as well as in political matters. For many Catholics, liberalism is a Pandora's box of anti-Catholic ideologies.

This raises two separate questions which may be stated as follows: 1. To what extent is economic liberalism (*i.e.*, the economic doctrine which supports the market economy) identified with the whole of the liberal *Weltanschauung*, or to what extent is economic liberalism independent of historical, philosophical, and theological liberalism? 2. To what extent are we concerned here with an accidental, temporary, and superficial misunderstanding between Catholicism and liberalism, or to what extent with a fundamental incompatibility?

Both questions are immense in scope. I shall merely suggest several lines of inquiry which will need to be pursued if we hope to achieve that understanding of the issues which their importance merits.

To what extent, then, is economic liberalism joined to philosophical liberalism? Historically, economic liberalism developed from a system of thought (of which it represents only one aspect) which was definitely not Catholic. Classical economics was the offspring of Locke and Hume. Adam Smith said that free trade is "Protestantism in commerce". And in John Stuart Mill we find a good example of one who conceived both economic and non-economic interrelationships in Benthamite terms. Liberal in economics, parliamentarian in politics, individualist in sociology, utilitarian in morals, associationist in psychology, and purely psychological in metaphysics—he incorporates in a grandiose synthesis the atomistic conception of man and the universe. It would appear that such

a system excludes God, since it rests on the denial of all absolutes, of all transcendence. The general economic interest (Mill would have said) cannot be directly perceived, hence supply and demand must meet in the market to yield an approximate equivalent of this general interest. Likewise, metaphysical and religious truth cannot be perceived with certitude, hence it is necessary to have a kind of market of opinions out of which will crystallize the one most nearly truthful (i.e., useful) opinion. Logically, therefore, the answer to Professor Roepke's question: "Must one be an agnostic in order to be a liberal economist?" is "Obviously, for liberalism is only another word for agnosticism."

But it would be a mistake to jump to such a hasty conclusion. It is true that liberalism was associated with the providentialist deism of the Physiocrats and that subsequently it was assimilated to the atheistic atomism of the English utilitarians, in particular that of Mill. Quesnay and Mirabeau were in favor of an enlightened despotism, Jean-Baptiste Say supported the First French Republic, and Bentham championed political and philosophical radicalism. But economic liberalism is based to a far greater extent on the body of scientifically established economic principles than it is on any philosophy or political doctrine. Certainly, there is an historic connection between economic liberalism and all the other aspects of the atomist system, but there is no logically necessary bond between them. No one can seriously believe that economic liberalism is inseparable from the Protestant doctrine of private interpretation of Scripture or is incompatible with the infallibility of the Pope. And yet we find that there are not a few scholars (both Catholics and non-Catholics) who summarily reject economic liberalism as the product of an outmoded utilitarian-associationist philosophy. Implicit in this rejection is the belief that there is only one possible philosophical foundation for economic liberalism, viz., that which supported classical economics. Is such a view

justified?

Bricks may be used to build a church or a brothel—they are neutral as regards the kind of structure for which they are used. Similarly, the same economic principles may be incorporated into more than one philosophical system. Indeed, it was liberalism itself which nourished the ambition of establishing an autonomous and philosophically neutral science of economics. But (say the integrists) is not this proclamation of neutrality the very essence of philosophical liberalism? Which leads to our second question: in what way and to what extent is Catholicism incompatible with liberalism as such?

Since the Reformation with its principle of the private interpretation of Scripture and more especially since the French Revolution with its doctrine of natural sovereignty, liberalism in all its forms has been the grand target of Catholic theologians and of the Roman magistry. The antiliberal crusade reached its height in the period between the condemnation of Lamennais' *L'Avenir* by Pope Gregory XVI in the Encyclical *Mirari vos* (1832) and Pope Pius X's repudiation of Sillon in 1910. There is little doubt that this represented, in part, a reaction of the Papacy to the Italian *Risorgimento* which menaced the temporal domains of the Church, and to the anticlerical policy of the Third French Republic. Still, the bitterness with which Catholicism everywhere sought to put down even the most peripheral excrescences of the liberal ideology is due to a more profound cause. There is a kind of "liberal" theology which strikes at the very soul of Catholicism no less than at its dogmatic foundations. Theological liberalism was a religious rationalism which eradicated from religion the very qualities which made it religious. It was the negation of the transcendental reality of the Church as the Body of Christ, a body both anterior and superior to its members. It denied the authority of dogma, the continuity of Catholic doctrine. Indeed, it was his strong aversion to theological liberalism which

caused Newman to quit the Church of England and to become a convert to Roman Catholicism. Liberalism in Newman's view is "the mistake of subjecting to human judgment those revealed doctrines which are in their nature beyond and independent of it, and of claiming to determine on intrinsic grounds the truth and value of propositions which rest for their reception simply on the external authority of the Divine Word."<sup>12</sup>

Clearly, a purely individualist conception of the Church and a purely naturalist conception of religious knowledge are not compatible with Catholicism or, for that matter, with any religion worthy of the name. Hence, the condemnation of theological liberalism unleashed a frenzy of opposition to everything which could conceivably emanate from any liberal ideology whatsoever. It led many Catholics to denounce democracy, the rights of man, and the free market in the most radical terms. "All freedom, not only absolute and unlimited freedom, but all freedom is of its very nature a plague, a spiritual plague" was the dictum which appeared around the year 1865 in *Civiltà Cattolica*.<sup>13</sup> And on June 27, 1871, Pope Pius IX declared to a group of French pilgrims from the diocese of Nevers: "This country (France) harbors an evil more fearsome than the Revolution or the Commune; it is Catholic liberalism."<sup>14</sup> The Pope had in mind Montalambert and Lacordaire, though their theses and aims must appear very clerical to the French Catholics of the present day. We know of Newman's horror of the French Revolution of 1789 and of the Revolution of 1830, and of how in the harbor of Algiers during the July Monarchy he turned his head in order not to have to watch the tricolor.<sup>15</sup> He liked to repeat Johnson's witticism that "the Devil was the first Whig" (because he was the first to revolt against constituted authority). Thus, even for a spirit as modern as Newman, liberalism formed a whole which from the religious standpoint was totally unacceptable. On the basis of his aversion to liberal

theology which he repudiated as an arrogant and seditious exaggeration of subjectivity to the detriment of the unity of the Faith and the authority of Revelation, he condemned all forms of liberalism, liberalism *en bloc*.<sup>16</sup>

Throughout this period we find two distinct sorts of motivation for Catholic anti-liberalism, though their lines of demarcation were largely obliterated by the unique historical circumstances of the era. First, Catholics were vitally concerned with the defense of transcendent religious truth against a naturalism which denied even the possibility of transcendence, and with the defense of truth itself against the indifferentism of the skeptics. Closely related to this was another major concern of Catholics, the defense of the established culture as against an emergent one. Catholics tended to cling to the remnants of that medieval civilization described by Jacques Maritain as "sacral"<sup>17</sup> and by P. Congar as "hierocratic."<sup>18</sup> By contrast, present-day Catholic theologians stress the fact that medieval civilization was only one of many transitory historical phenomena associated with the Church and that Catholic doctrine may in no sense be equated with the characteristically medieval subordination of the temporal power to the Church, of profane science to theology, and of specifically temporal values to ecclesiastical aims.

It is not easy to separate what is essential to Catholicism from what is purely circumstantial in the antiliberal reaction of Catholics in the nineteenth century and we cannot undertake here even to sketch the considerations involved. It must suffice to note that present-day views are much more discriminating and that a lot of water has flowed under the bridges of the Tiber since the days of the *Syllabus*. Sometimes Catholics (or unbelieving champions of Catholicism like Charles Maurras) have drawn caricatures of Catholicism, but caricatures ought not to be mistaken for the original. The Catholic motto *in certis unitas* has as its necessary corollary, *in dubiis libertas*. But temporal problems and *a fortiori* eco-

nostic ones belong to the domain of relative and thus of discussable truths. Catholic theology does not exclude a plurality of opinions in profane matters. On the contrary, it encourages such pluralism seeing in it a testimony to the transcendence of revealed truth as compared with profane truth. Even in the realm of purely religious knowledge, however, the teaching authority of the Church is not the sole source of information. The true Catholic path to religious enlightenment is not passive mental docility, but "the ardor of love, eager to find God in the Church." He who truly appreciates how far religious reality stands above our poor powers of expression and conception, can easily understand how it is that we can only really know God as we approach Him, step by step, by means of our own awkward endeavors. Faith is not intellectual certitude; it is the apprehension of mystery.

No doubt the metaphysics (or the anti-metaphysics) on which a certain variety of liberalism is grounded, is anti-Christian. But that does not mean that liberalism can find no place in the Christian universe, nor that there can be no Catholic liberalism. If it is true that Catholic tradition can be described as sacral, monist, authoritarian, extrinsicist, dogmatic (particularly since the Council of Trent), it also is true that these adjectives do not exhaust the description of Catholic tradition: so anyone may discover who cares to read the Fathers of the Church and St. Thomas Aquinas.

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The second part of M. Villey's essay will be published in the Fall 1959 number of MODERN AGE.

<sup>1</sup>Cf., for example, R. P. Fyot, S. J., *Dimensions de l'homme et essence économique*, one of the most recent and most weighty of Catholic works condemning liberalism (Presses Universitaires de France: Paris, 1952).

<sup>2</sup>John, 17:9.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Yves Congar, *Chrétiens desunis, principes d'un oecuménisme catholique* (Editions du Cerf, 1937) and *Jalons pour une Théologie du Laïcat* (1953), especially pp. 64 ff. and 146 ff.

<sup>4</sup>Such is also the tendency of the impressive and beautiful novels of Graham Greene: *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter*, *The End of the Affair*.

<sup>5</sup>Illustrated in the case of the so-called "Catholic integrists" whose views have been condemned by the Church.

<sup>6</sup>In the sense in which this word is used by Colin Clark and Jean Fourastie.

<sup>7</sup>The condemnation of Galileo was typical of this attitude.

<sup>8</sup>This much has been admitted by such contemporary Catholic thinkers as Jacques Maritain (*Du Régime Temporel et de la Liberté, Humanisme intégral*); E. Maunier (*Refaire la Renaissance, Feu la Chrétienté*); Y. Congar (*Jalons pour une Théologie du Laïcat*), et alii.

<sup>9</sup>Emmanuel Mounier, *De la Propriété capitaliste à la Propriété humaine* (Paris, 1936), in the series of pamphlets entitled *Questions disputées* (Desclee de Brouwer, publishers).

<sup>10</sup>Cited and commented on by J. Dumontier in *La Vie Intellectuelle* (February 1953), p. 56.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Wilhelm Roepke, *Internationale Ordnung* (Zurich, 1945), p. 157.

<sup>12</sup>John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua* (ed. Ward, Oxford University Press; London, 1931), Note A. p. 493. On pp. 499 ff. there is a list of theses which constitute Newman's antiliberal Syllabus, so to speak.

<sup>13</sup>Cited by Constantin in the article "Liberalisme catholique" in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, (Vacant et Mangerot, Eds.), col. 585.

<sup>14</sup>Constantin, *op. cit.*, col. 607.

<sup>15</sup>This did not prevent Newman from saluting Lacordaire and the French "Catholic liberals" as "precursors." "If I might presume," he wrote in the *Apologia pro vita sua* (*op. cit.*, p. 492), "to contrast Lacordaire and myself, I should say that we had been both of us inconsistent;—he, a Catholic, in calling himself a Liberal; I, a Protestant, in being an Anti-liberal; and moreover that the cause of this inconsistency had been in both cases one and the same. That is, we were both of us such good conservatives, as to take up with what we happened to find established in our respective countries, at the time when we came into active life. Toryism was the creed of Oxford; he inherited, and made the best of, the French Revolution."

<sup>16</sup>Notwithstanding, Newman defends a conception of the autonomy of economic science which liberals could thoroughly agree with in his extremely interesting analysis of Nassau Senior's inaugural lecture in economics at the University of Oxford in 1827. Cf. Newman, *The Idea of a University* (The American Press: New York, 1941) pp. 102 ff.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. Jacques Maritain, *L'Humanisme intégral*.

<sup>18</sup>Yves Congar, *Jalons pour une Théologie du Laïcat* (Editions du Cerf: Paris, 1953), p. 142.



*The rise and fall of the new Spanish cities, in counterpoint to the life and death of the old, is examined here by an American who lives with his family in Spain. Mr. Kerrigan quotes from Hilaire Belloc: "In all that enormous story of Rome, from the dim Etrurian origins right up to the end of her thousand years, the Wall of the Town is more sacred than the limits of the Empire."*

## *The Slums of Spain*

ANTHONY KERRIGAN

AT THE CENTER OF every great Spanish city is the *casco*. The word means casque or cranium or crown or helmet or hull; and, in relation to cities, it is the city-within-the-walls, even though often the walls themselves may have disappeared. Invariably the *casco* is the old city, around which the new has formed itself; despite its age, it is inevitably the most solid section, standing on the most commanding site. The walls of its buildings are thicker, its foundations more stable, its position the best defended against the sea or a neighboring river as well as the most dominant over the terrain, its patios and fountains the most poetic, and above all, its streets the narrowest.

Narrow streets, active in their winding like live snakes, resist the destruction which the grand passive avenues allow: the pavement, often cobblestone, is not pounded by speeding machines, the basic structure is not weakened by shifts of building sites and destruction of terrain for ephemeral commercial reasons. The traffic in the narrow streets, in short, is human.

Unaided by the machine, modern man is no match for the great field stones which his patient and long-toiling ancestors managed to heave into place and which they found most redoubtable and resistant to damage, whether from enemy incursion or commercial cunning, or from natural erosion.

By strict modern definition the larger part of every *casco* of every city in Spain is a slum. The *casco* meets all the requirements: age, unavailability for commercial exploitation, insufficient monetary return per square foot, uneconomic spacing, unavailability to traffic and lack of accommodation for machine transport. No functional architect is of a temper to forgive the inadequacy of plumbing in exchange for such imponderables as the patina on the facades and rooftops; no municipal planner is likely to accept the disproportion of investment to yield in lieu of such unmeasurable considerations as the continuity of dwelling ownership by the same family through the generations; no housing expert



would be of a mind to find intrinsic value in the individuality of patios, the total variety of windows, portals, vents and doorways, the irregularity of facades, arches and passageways, all of which disallow uniform commercial activity of any kind.

Within the diversity of styles which the slow growth of the early cities allowed, a certain medieval set of patterns is to be seen in all the ancient *cascos*. The narrow streets themselves are the key: feudal arch-individuality among the great competing families caused sudden twists in streets, forcing them around new wings added to urban palaces; since the sun is hot in Spain and the Moors contributed greatly to building design, the streets were made narrow with the functional intent of providing caverns of shade; the proliferation of churches, totally unmaterialistic in aim and uneconomic in purpose, is a true measure of the life of these streets.

Across the face of the country it is the *cascos* of the old cities that characterize Spain: the powerful casque standing over the nearly circular river at Toledo, the cranium of a city within the still standing walls at Avila, the crown of streets around the cathedral at Burgos, the helmet capping the Plaza Mayor of Salamanca, the hull of houses running along the Guadalquivir River at Sevilla.

Since the traditional slums of Spain, those slums which are the *cascos*, are totally different from the modern slums of the great American cities, and since, like anything vivified by history and tradition, they are many-faceted, it would appear worthwhile to consider them in homely detail. The new industrial slums, the housing developments which wear—as soon as they are built—an air of decay, and which put on a mantle of monotony, scarcely yield a theme for an essay, for they are the same everywhere, and are destined to have no history.

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Once, in 1952, for six months, we lived within the *casco* at Barcelona, in a pension

overlooking the tree tops of the Ramblas, the most Barcelonesque of promenades. Every block along this richly-blooded artery of Mediterranean life is strongly distinct. Beginning at the central Plaza de Catalunya, the social level descends implacably block by block as one descends toward the bay. The banks and official buildings at the beginning of the street yield at once to the bird market—riotously colored psittacine birds and numberless African species—held along both sides of the wide walk. The slum streets soon begin to disgorge into the Ramblas. The block devoted to flowers—luxuriant tiers of cut flowers and plants, and of woven palm fronds in Easter Week—faces the mouth of the great central market, with its polychrome monuments of produce, arranged by merchants with the skill of Cubists: planes of orange surface and texture of shadow-filled grapes about on the centripetal geometry of the displayed fish, limned in patterns worthy of a stained-glass window. Just before the foci of seaport prostitution are reached, at the precipice of the descent, a paradoxical and contradictory note is furnished by the appearance of the Opera House. The Opera's front is shallow because of its position directly on the street; its socially anomalous situation is made evident in the entrance to all the upper reaches, an anonymous opening which is to be found on the lower-class Calle de San Pablo: an unmarked door, dismally lit, in a narrow street among contraceptive shops and milk stores. Our pension was a few doors from the Opera: ice-cold rooms in winter and three meals in the brazier-heated dining room below in exchange for the equivalent of fifty cents a day. Our companions were Scandinavian painters, an American musician, Spanish Army junior officers (badly off economically as a group unless their families have money): no proletarians, but all of us were nevertheless dwellers in the slums.

The slums of Barcelona are redolent of the sea and characterized by the port, as the slums of Gerona are odiferous of the

river that cuts them in two and characterized by the gypsies that live on the dry patches of the river bed and in the crumbling blocks around the cathedral. In all *cascos* in Spain the historically basic elements of the city are always all to be found, cheek by jowl: the cathedral, formerly site of a synagogue, mosque, or basilica; prostitute-infested streets, where through all history women have traded upon their own persons; the great market areas, ancient terminals of the country people with the loads of their own produce. The slums around the Barceloneta, outside the *casco*, are purely maritime, for its streets are bounded on both ends by the sea. The splendid Gothic church of Santa Maria del Mar is at the center of another slum area. Everything in the Santa Maria quarter is proletarian: from the black burned marks left scarred into the stone by the revolutionary fires that were kindled there during the Civil War to the long lists of prices chalked on slates outside the legume shops which specialize in lentils and beans. The working-class incendiaries set fire to this perfect little church, burning all that would burn and scouring the ancient stone, and they set up a machine gun at the entrance and fired several bandoliers of bullets into the area of the high altar, demonstrating their deep-seated unatheistic belief that some Presence there could be made to suffer for their hunger and historic ill-luck.

The chalk-marked blackboards outside the lentil shops announce the prices of a dozen varieties of beans, chick peas and edible seeds—in 1958, as low as ten cents per kilogram. If the slum dweller lacks gas or facilities for wood fires, beans soaked and cooked in the shop can be purchased to provide the most basic proletarian meal known since the Greeks. Four-course meals—the poor in the slum quarters, fully as traditional as their opposites among the aristocrats, have an equally formal sense of ritual and propriety, of the proper number of courses, with a clean plate served for every course—four-course meals are

available at standard prices, quite within the realm of possibility for the single working man. (It is the large Catholic family—not necessarily the largest, for they get state bonuses—which is badly off in present-day Spain, rather than the unmarried worker.) One group and the other, the rich and the poor, are both equally far away from the mediocre spirit of the convenient—and characterless—new quick-service places. For some twenty cents, a poor man in a slum restaurant in Barcelona is served by a waiter in accordance with the same norms, with the same formality, as the epicurean.

In one regard there is likely to be more formality: since there will be no *bon-vivant* among the clientele, there will be a lack of banter and easiness, a positive austerity of service which would suit Philip II at table more readily than it would a cheap new millionaire. The poor man in the slum restaurant has the same habitual right to make known his peculiar private preferences, his need for certain adjuncts to eating, as has a rich man in one of the expensive and immoral restaurants on the brittle avenue officiously named after the present chief of the Spanish state. Though the tip left by the slum dweller for his servitor amount only to a cent, the waiter might quite likely receive it with far less slyness and most certainly with less rancor than if he were discharging his office—of an equal correctness in either case—at a haunt for wastrels. The momentary and thoroughly realistic hierarchy of servitor and customer will have allowed the job in hand to have been done with some, traditional, skill.

The solidly workaday life of the slums around Santa Maria del Mar is well attested to by the names of the streets, most of which date from the epoch of the medieval guilds. Diagonally across from the church apse is a "Salt Water Fish Shop," the silver prizes of the catch displayed in rush baskets, among leaves and chipped ice; following around the church from this point one passes the mouths of such re-

soundingly basic Catalan-named streets as Calle de Caldereras (Street of the Copper-smiths), Calle de la Formageria (Street of the Cheese Makers), and the Castilianized-Catalan Calle de Sombrerers (Street of the Hatmakers); the streets with purely Castilian names reveal the same basic concerns: Calle de la Vidriera (Street of the Glass Workers), Calle de la Espaderia (Street of the Sword Shop), Calle de Banos Viejos (Street of the Old Baths), Calle de la Fossa de las Moreras (Street of the Mulberry Moat). The naming of streets differently in Castilian or Catalan is a measure of the perfect bilingualism of slum dwellers in Barcelona. When children are raised in the city, street bilingualism is native; their Castilian tends to be marred by Catalan accent, but there is less disadvantage for the slum dwellers in this regard than for the upper classes: the business man will normally have the thicker accent in Castilian, inasmuch as the workers come into contact with the displaced southern Spaniards from Murcia and Andalucia, who furnish the floating labor force of Catalonia and who supply the accent that is characteristic of the proletariat.

The slums of Madrid are among the most dramatic in the world. They stretch up and down the inclined streets of the capital, and, lying as they do on the luminous horizon made vivid in visual memory by Velasquez, they are among the starkest in the world. The plain of Castile follows off into infinity beyond the black outlines of the buildings: so that to emerge from the subway entrance at Lavapies (Foot Wash), climbing up from the dark underground on an afternoon when the section is swept by gusts of the mountain wind of winter is to behold a sudden flare of light in which the human beings of the street, as well as their sparse buildings, stand out like luminous silhouettes. The *Latina* quarter, a rolling slum section closer to the Plaza Mayor, is a stark area of traditional poverty, where the virtues of the Spanish poor—unambition, self-sacrifice, disinterest in material accumulation—are cultivated, or where

poverty is made into a virtue by an exercise in ascetic willfulness which is the inner resource of the people of Spain, their marrow in this world. Latina and Lavapies, untypical of the *casco* as they are, exemplify the meaning of historical slum as against the modern planned housing slum. The inhabitant par excellence of Latina and Lavapies is the craftsman, the descendant of the medieval guildsman; he has been there, as representative of his office, since the early days of Madrid as a city; he has therefore a historical presence, and like a solid grove of trees he and his have roots there; his Spanish pride is augmented by that of the craftsman exercising an office, usually his by inheritance; and, though he prides himself on being in a more satisfactory position than the floating poor of the labor force, who are eligible for places in the government housing projects because they have nothing, neither roots, nor fixed family residence, nor skills on which they could live independently of entrepreneurs, the craftsman of Latina and Lavapies is actually likely to earn less money working for himself than the factory worker, the basic proletarian, earns by virtue of his membership in the government-controlled mass syndicates. In short, the present epoch irreconcilably favors the organized industrial proletarian in the new slums, even in Spain, where the syndicates have no power that is not given them from above.

Though the houses are newer in the housing-development slums and the inhabitants may earn more money, there is less life and no character in these "international-style" conglomerates, where anonymity serves as decoration and where no families have been born and lived through a generation or are likely to stay for that time. Scenes for a novel could with all naturalness be laid in Latina or Lavapies—and no need for it to be a "proletarian novel" at all—but not so much as a few pages of narrative could be extracted from the routine of living in the housing developments, for the sensory life of the *casco* would have to give way to a description of

the plumbing facilities. Unlike Montmartre, there are no Spanish slums which would serve as settings for *La vie de Bohème*, but the slums of the *cascos* have as rich a history as their French counterparts and therefore as full a repertory of biographical lives, of novels of themselves.

The slums of Madrid's *casco* radiate from the Puerta del Sol and the Plaza Mayor. The Puerta del Sol, now lost to life and given over to commerce, is the site where on the Second of May, 1808—the famous *Dos de Mayo* of Goya depicts the scene—the slum dwellers of Madrid and agricultural workers from the outskirts drove their daggers into the bellies of Napoleon's horses, and began the War of Independence (the Peninsular War, in English usage). The traditional theatrical streets, the old alleyways of prostitution, the buildings which house authority, the popular streets where Ministers of State have been stabbed by political assassins and royal carriages have been blown up by anarchist bombs, the baroque Jesuit churches, all lie in the areas around these two focal points. The cafés where everything of importance has been discussed by polemicists and politicians formerly lay in their majority around the Puerta del Sol (at present they have shifted nearer the Prado Museum); modernity has overpowered the behind-the-walls immutability, and Madrilenos now stand at ubiquitous seafood bars and litter the floors with the shells of mollusks. The life in this area has lost all medieval flavor, and the values of existence here are no longer those of tradition in the moral sense. The Madrid slums, the newer and outlying most of all, show the sacrifice of the poor to industrialism in Spain. Where the older cities of the Peninsula, with their feudal air, can still boast *cascos* with great buildings grandly substantial even though dark with weather, where human life is yet the measure, and continuity is visible—whether in the tending of patios or the raising of children born where their fathers were born—in the capital city the shifts and changes of con-

temporary quick building have made their incursions. Madrid is the newest of the great Spanish cities, and its later slums grow tawdry with modern speed: Latina and Lavapiés are dramatic in their black and white tones and their simple grandeur above the plain of Castile, but the new houses decay with the haste of Industry, and the streets that are thoroughfares have already become nests of machine anarchy. In the housing developments the human being plays little part, and he seems to be creating nothing that would fix him even in his family's memory or give his eternal anonymity a name.

\* \* \*

The Balearic Islands provide purer examples of medieval slums conserving an integral way of life, a history still lived, a sense of continuance not available to the ephemeral settlements based merely on economic speculation and built around a center which may die in a night for reasons of economy. There is no suggestion here, behind the monumental walls or in the thick-beamed buildings, already of great age, of the potential Gold Rush ghost town which lies concealed behind every settlement facing on a Main Street. There is no industrial debris—yet.

The *casco* of the Carthaginian-founded city of Ibiza, capital of the island of Ibiza, is most classical, both in site and construction; its walls and arched portals are largely intact, especially on the sea side. The walled city is built on a massive height, directly up over the bay. As in the *casco* at Gerona, there is almost no possibility of motor transport, both because of the narrow winding streets and the flights of steps into which the streets break with rhythmic regularity whenever the pitch of the road warrants it. The entire city is a medieval slum, now that the lords of pomp and wealth are gone; but the Ibicencos live in a dominating splendor, though the expansive spirit seems to have gone out of this once strategic settlement. The slum dwellers continue tending their patios as before,



only now there is no imaginative governing minority.

Across a brief expanse of water the city of Palma, on the island of Mallorca, boasts a *casco* of rather unusual wealth inasmuch as the old palace quarter still flourishes. Palma is small enough, though it is a large city, so that the center is not determined by the mass (as the centripetal push at Times Square determines the center of New York; as it does at Piccadilly Circus, in London; or the Puerta del Sol, in Madrid), but rather, as in old cities full of grace, it is centered around the axes of its promenades (as is Paris at the Champs; or Barcelona at the Ramblas). There is no large city in the United States, it scarcely needs saying, whose center is a focus so simple as the place of the evening walk. The central promenade—and the center of Palma—is the Borne (the ancient bourn, site of a riverbed). The beauty of the tree-lined walk does not depend on a sporadic building renovation, and the entrance and principal point of this walk is lined with decidedly out-of-date buildings whose facades make no concession to middle-class aesthetics. The side streets are narrow, occasionally arcaded, and furnish dwelling to people of minimal income, while the cafés around the central fountain are in several instances definitely lower class. True, the palace of the most notorious recent family, ancient smugglers, is at hand, just beneath the steps to the cathedral, but it is on the side of the *casco* where lie the medieval and Renaissance palaces.

The three basic human elements of life in Palma, according to Camilo José Cela, Spanish novelist and Academician living in this city, are the great smuggling families, the decadent provincial aristocracy (whose titles are still green and stem from a minor branch: the Kingdom of Aragon by blood and the House of Bourbon by grant), and the Catholic Jews. All three groups are well—perhaps best—represented inside the *casco*. Within living memory there were locked gates at either end of the *juderia* (the Ghetto), though the

Jews there—mainly silversmiths and goldsmiths—were already dogmatic Catholics; the great families of the aristocracy have splendid Renaissance palaces—most of which date back in their foundations to the time of Catalan Gothic—lying in the high area around the 13th century cathedral; and the smugglers in all their new glory are splendidly and symbolically represented in the chief palace at the edge of the aristocratic quarter, where it abuts on the populace.

Palma's *casco*, then, is probably better favored than most in its still remaining palaces; its Catholic Jews have enriched their two preferred churches—Santa Eulalia, immediately adjoining the old ghetto, and Montesión (Mount Zion), a converted synagogue; and the new rich have cultivated their own gardens to public advantage. At the other end of the city wall from the cathedral, and still facing the sea, is the Baluarte de San Pedro, a present day barracks and past defensive position, at whose entrance lies the classic *casco* slum of Spain. The quintessential quality of this quarter is shown at the end of the barracks area, where an opening in the thick walls reads:

Parque de Artillería Mixta  
de Mallorca  
LAVADERO

The plebeian PUBLIC WASH HOUSE is introduced with the greatest naturalness into the Mixed Artillery Park: the eternal washerwoman and the eternal soldier. The houses in this quarter of craftsmen, of "men who have offices to perform," as one inhabitant there once told me, are open to the sun and the larger number command a view of the beautiful harbor, specifically over the section of sailing vessels, the dozens of large black two- and three-masted work schooners which carry a good deal of the produce between the islands. The winding street staircases and openness of the quarter (though the streets remain narrow) remind one of some *quartier* in the north of Paris, but the city wall is here still



intact, and there is a definitive medieval air to the life. The city wall itself, fronting the sea, is wide and solid enough to provide for houses built in and upon it. Not very many yards away, the portal to the Bishop's Palace opens out of the walls and the palace itself is built directly over them; a few doors from the palace and already in the slum, an American painter working permanently in Europe lives *in* the walls; his windows give upon the schooner basin, and while he sits at his table, the masts of the ships travel past his vision. The quarter resounds with traditional sounds: military bugle calls from the barracks, the cries of street vendors, and the noise of children playing in the streets without fear of machines. Although some windows in this quarter are curtained with burlap sacking and glass is often absent, there are also fine tile flights of stairs in nearly every house. The streets are characteristically named: the Starching Woman's Street, the Street of the Olive Tree, and, reflecting the military presence, Gunpowder Street. The main plaza of this section, the Plaza de los Jinetes de Alcalá, is cubistically perfect in its irregularity; its cleanliness and brightness in the sun is a model of urban living; its cheap restaurants are totally individual.

Just to the west of the city walls, above the harbor, lies the Santa Catalina fisherman's quarter. It is outside the *casco*, but it is a traditional center, one of the authentic Mediterranean *bas fondos*, and more specifically, a microcosm of classic Spanish social organization.\*

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\*The futuristic journalists of the local Falange newspaper often turn their humorless attention to this ancient area, and write editorial articles on the desirability of razing the quarter and of installing hotels on the ruins. The feeling of inferiority in the souls of the journalists leads them to speak—with a paradoxical nuance of reverse xenophobia—of the nation's appearance in the eyes of the foreigners. How will the visitor from Europe, as the Frenchman is called, look upon this and other nearly medieval quarters? And the Barrio de San Pedro, too, is attacked for being a shame to a progressive nation going forward under the aegis of the totalitarian Falange.

The Barrio de Santa Catalina, for such is the fisherman's quarter called, is a white Balearic seaport height redolent of toil, privation, joy with its sudden extravagance, and an acceptance of calamity. On the face of it the quarter is sound of fiber: the work of the men is done in the sun and they are therefore neither cadaverous or phthisical in appearance, as urban workers so often are; there are no newspapers (the fishermen do not read them) or other debris flying about in the air, as in the slums of more industrial cities; and there is ever present the astringent smell of the sea. The houses will often boast fine decorative detail, readily visible from the street: fine old glass chandeliers, colorful tile facings on the walls, great wooden beamed ceilings; the worked lace on the windows of some of the dwellings is often of unexpected delicacy. On the shore of the bay below, where now there are a park and seaside promenade bordered with beds of flowers, the fishermen spread their nets for extended lengths beside the feet of the strollers. Often the nets are spread out into the streets in the area round the Santa Catalina Public Wash House; the fishermen and their women repair their nets in the open, dexterously plying long needles, their hands brown as the iodine-colored fibers. Speculators have been seeking the desirable heights for years, but the fishermen refuse to be driven away.

The Santa Catalina market, in the center of the district, is crowded daily with the poor on their errands. The market is a great block-square bazaar, filled with a wealth of produce. The multi-colored and multi-formed fish of the Mediterranean are piled in geometric designs and arranged by immense fishwives with the care deserving of a fair. Baroque octopus and Plutonian squid are of gustatory importance to the poor, whose palates have not been refined out of existence. In season their wide choice includes eels' litter and shrimp-like caracols. The greens available are of intense freshness. Like the peasants

of France—though to a lesser degree—the medieval poor of Palma drink wine that a puritan factory-owner elsewhere could scarce afford in such ample supply. Only the paper flowers sold solely by gypsies are false, the bread of the poor being unadulterated in the industrial manner.

The Public Wash House, a small temple of purely lower-class aspect, is the scene of all day long ebulliance. Stocky wives crowd each other joyously amid a Mediterranean din of gossip, opinionating, objection, and ritual protest.

Except for the segment of wall facing the sea, left there as protective sea wall, the great medieval city walls of Palma were torn down at the beginning of this century of Progress. A deep moat in the form of an arroyo that fills with water during the fall rains is all that defines the *casco* on the west. The advanced politicians of the early 1900's, inspired believers in progress and a new age, decreed the destruction of the great walls, at the cost of much effort and labor, for they were anxious to turn their back on the past: they placed their trust in the future, and every symbol and remnant of medievalism was stained with dark and uncontrollable history. As a few years were to make clear, they merely exchanged the solid old ramparts and rock-hewn dwellings for shoddy new industrial units and unsubstantial housing blocks of drear

monotony. The new slums have decayed at an accelerated rate over the old, and by now they lie in a state of such meanness of spirit that the very soul of the functional planner must be shaken.

Because medieval Europe was more truly international than nationalistic Europe later and its great architecture more validly universal than the spiritless "international style" building of today, every country involved in the history of the Middle Ages, of Christendom, displays much the same pattern of the solid old become the slum while beside it the shoddy new rawly ages prematurely. In France, an overnight ship's passage from Mallorca, the contrast is dramatic. Paris offers a comparison which symbolizes the entire phenomenon. The relatively late church of Saint-Sulpice—which gives its name to the tawdry church art known throughout France as "l'art de Saint-Sulpice" and which itself is wrapped in that air of abandon, of mysterious emptiness which typifies the slum—is significantly not a true church of the slums at all, but merely a slum church; while two miles north of the former fortifications of Paris, the basilica of Saint-Denis, one of the noble structures of universal church architecture, has now characteristically come to lie amidst the very essence of a slum—*though within it were buried the Kings of France.*

# A Note on Farm Price Support Programs

EDWARD F. RENSHAW

*A close and candid study of federal subsidies and their effect upon agriculture.*

RECENTLY PROFESSOR WILLARD COCHRANE boldly suggested that a combination of circumstances is pushing in the direction of a cartelization of agriculture. "I am convinced that society is eventually and inevitably going to grant monopoly powers to agriculture, via government, to permit and to enable the many producers in agriculture to act in concert."<sup>1</sup> In *Farm Prices, Myth and Reality*,<sup>2</sup> the main outlines of a monopolistic course of action for agriculture which seem to Cochrane to have more desirable than undesirable features are once again set forth; the monopolistic features, however, are cloaked in the guise of a "public-utility approach to the price-income problems of agriculture."<sup>3</sup>

The objective of the public utility approach does not differ from the objective of acreage limitations, export dumping, import restrictions, domestic multiple price plans, destruction of output, expansion of demand, storage, and direct payments which were designed to obtain for farmers a given price support; the difference lies

in the method suggested for obtaining the price support end, which is basically a comprehensive supply control program comparable to the fluid milk, tobacco, and sugar programs. Cochrane likens his public utility approach primarily to that of sugar.

The need for a cartelization of agriculture essentially rests on Cochrane's conviction that the technological forces shifting supply to the right will continue in the next decade to out-pace growth in demand; with both the elasticities of demand and supply with respect to price inelasticity, the net effect of a victory by supply will be to reduce agricultural income and add to the welfare disparity vis-a-vis agriculture and the rest of the economy unless society is prepared to underwrite a large price-income support program out of the treasury or grant agriculture more comprehensive control over supply. Since Cochrane doubts the willingness of society to continue underwriting an agricultural support program, he urges that increased attention be given to the latter alternative.

While it is a matter of conjecture and debate whether the technological shift in supply will continue indefinitely to out-pace demand,<sup>4</sup> and while Cochrane's emphasis on short-run inelasticities of demand

and supply may create a misconception as to the nature of their respective long-run elasticities,<sup>5</sup> his bold, if not courageous, suggestion to create via the political process a more comprehensive system of production and marketing controls in order that commercial farmers might enjoy "reasonably good and stable prices and incomes" raises the question, what have been the income effects of those programs to which his comprehensive proposal might be compared?

### *The Effects of Control Programs*

Of the two sides to the income question, this note is directed towards summarizing information with respect to the apparent effect of control programs on the level of agricultural income rather than its stability. Have the fluid milk, tobacco and sugar programs raised the level of producer income relative to the incomes of agriculture as a whole and the non-farm sector? The word "level" is used to denote an average of several years as opposed to prices and incomes prevailing in any one year; where the data permit, a three year average level is used to iron out transitory fluctuations.

Selected for comparison are the periods 1947-49, in which farm operators received the highest net income ever recorded by the Department of Agriculture, and the most recent period for which data are available, 1954-56. Between these two periods prices received by farmers declined 11.2 per cent; prices paid by farmers, on the other hand, rose, thus accelerating the decline in the parity ratio which fell 21 per cent. During this period the average price received for sugar beets increased by one-half of one per cent; the price of sugar cane increased 10.4 per cent; flue-cured tobacco, 13 per cent; and burley tobacco, 12 per cent. Of the three commodities subject to the most stringent production controls, only fluid milk failed to increase in price; it declined, on the average, 8.1 per cent, somewhat less than the index of prices received by farmers. The price data support the hypothesis that commodity con-

trol programs have been more successful in maintaining, and in some instances raising, prices than farm support programs in general.

On the income side, level comparisons can be made easily only with respect to dairy and tobacco enterprises; see Table 1. These data indicate that all seven of the USDA's 28 commercial family-operated farms having dairy or tobacco enterprises rose in ranked income status (columns 4 and 5). Save for Wisconsin dairy farms, these enterprises were more successful in maintaining net income than farm operators in general whose income declined 10.4 per cent, and the USDA's 28 commercial farms whose income declined on the average 24.7 per cent.

Only one of the seven enterprises had a better than average net income during the 1954-56 period; and only three of the seven had incomes which ranked better than the average for all 28 enterprises considered. While the control programs were relatively successful at preserving net income during the recent decline, they did not induce adjustments necessary to create "good" incomes. Even the three enterprises which had an increase in net income between 1947-49 and 1954-56 lost ground relative to the 31.9 per cent increase in net income enjoyed by non-farm families between 1947-54.<sup>6</sup>

Turning to a different set of data, it does not appear that sugar producers were much better off than other farms in 1949, the only year for which data are available. See Tables 2 and 3 for comparisons. Those instances in which sugar producing counties or parishes have higher net incomes than the average for their respective states are about offset by areas which have lower incomes. In connection with sugar, it should be pointed out that the data are not inconsistent with the hypothesis that the gains from the control program have been capitalized into land values. With respect to Louisiana sugar producing parishes, one notes that the value of land and buildings per acre in farms in 1950 is higher in all

TABLE 1

*Net Farm Income per Farm, Commercial Family-Operated Farms, by Type, Averages 1947-1949 and 1954-1956, and Their Rank.<sup>1</sup>*

	Average net income per farm (dollars)		Percentage change — columns (1) + (2) (3)	Rank 1947-49 (4)	Rank 1954-56 (5)
	1947-49 (1)	1954-56 (2)			
Dairy farms					
Central Northeast	3,892	4,077	4.8	20	12
Eastern Wisconsin	4,366	3,133	-28.2	18	16
Western Wisconsin	3,284	2,607	-20.6	23	22
Corn Belt farms					
Hog-dairy	5,639	5,281	-6.4	15	6
Tobacco farms					
Tobacco-livestock (Kentucky)	3,334	3,163	-5.1	22	15
Small tobacco farms (N. Car.)	2,354	2,697	14.6	25	21
Large tobacco-cotton farms (N. Car.)	3,923	4,142	5.6	19	11
Average 28 enterprises	6,370	4,798	-24.7	—	—

cases than the state average (column 3, Table 2), and that in all save three of the 12 cases the average size of farm is greater (column 4), negating the alternative hypothesis that sugar land is inherently more productive. An investigation of the determinants of irrigated land values supports the same hypothesis;<sup>8</sup> according to Johnson, a premium must be paid to obtain land with tobacco quotas.<sup>9</sup> The capitalization of gain, which Cochrane chooses to call "cost of doing business in a stabilized agriculture,"<sup>10</sup> whether it be into land values or, as he would advocate, marketing certificates, bears careful scrutiny.

The paradox of Cochrane's suggestion to cartelize agriculture is the presumption that farmers can be made significantly better off by increasing the cost of doing business. Admittedly, the farmers who own the land or obtain the marketing certificates would stand to benefit from this plan via the capitalization process, but this is a once and for all benefit unless agriculture is unexpectedly restabilized at higher price levels in future periods. The young farmer trying to enter the business and the farmer struggling to expand his unit of operation would not benefit from an increase in the cost of

doing business. That is, unless the windfall accruing to farmers in general ironed out imperfections in the capital market, such that ease of financing scale adjustments outweighed the increased cost. At this juncture, the effect of support programs on the capital market is still a matter of conjecture and, in any event, the effect should be compared to alternative ways of obtaining the same end at less cost to the taxpayer and to the consumer.

The objections one is forced to raise against any program designed to raise prices above long run free market equilibrium levels are that it may impede adjustments<sup>11</sup> which are not only desirable but inevitable, and that it will not distribute benefits in a manner consistent with the ideal of a more nearly equal distribution of income.

#### *The Need for Adjustment*

While Cochrane performs a service by pointing out the existence of a myth which holds that agriculture is just a little out of adjustment, that it can be made to adjust easily by tinkering with the price mechanism, he may be performing a disservice to agriculture in the long run by emphasizing



TABLE 2  
*Farm Income and Related Parish and State Data, Louisiana  
Sugar Producing Areas*

Parish	Sugar acreage as a Per Cent of Cropland Harvested, 1949 <sup>12</sup> (1)	Median Farm Income 1949 <sup>13</sup> (2)	Value of Land and Buildings in Farms, 1950 <sup>14</sup> (3)	Average Farm Size (acres) <sup>14</sup> (4)
Ascension	45.6	\$1,402	\$107.81	77.5
Assumption	72.1	1,062	86.08	249.0
Iberia	45.5	1,067	116.74	125.6
Iberville	48.0	1,576	99.21	164.4
La Fayette	42.0	1,392	187.75	44.3
Pointe Coupee	17.1	978	87.18	104.9
St. James	63.5	980	85.14	171.2
St. John the Baptist	59.6	1,154	89.42	245.1
St. Martin	23.9	1,167	100.38	55.4
St. Mary	66.1	1,125	89.44	410.9
Terrebonne	58.5	1,240	117.06	160.3
West Baton Rouge	53.6	924	124.86	125.7
Weighted average, 12 parishes		1,174		
State	9.0	1,106	82.21	90.2

ing the need for adjustment on the output side to maintain aggregate agricultural income as opposed to a more difficult course of adjustment on the input side designed to bring about factor price equalization both within agriculture and between agriculture and the rest of our economy.

Even if the price of agricultural products were held at parity, there would exist a need for revolutionary adjustments on the input side to attain and maintain factor price equalization in the wake of general economic growth which continually increases the marginal product of labor and its price relative to most other inputs.

Holding both agricultural prices and the state of the arts constant, a large movement of labor out of agriculture and a recombination of agricultural resources would still be necessary to bring about a more nearly equal distribution of income, since the variance in farm operator income both within agriculture and between agricultural regions is about as great as the variance between farm and non-farm family in-

comes. In 1954, for instance, the coefficient of mean variation between farm and non-farm income was 46 per cent; coefficient of the mean variation between the USDA's 28 commercial farms and non-farm income was 13 per cent. On the other hand, the coefficient of variation with the USDA's group of 28 commercial farms was 87 per cent; between the USDA's six geographical regions, 38 per cent; and within the Department of Commerce's distribution of farm operator incomes, 43 per cent. In general too little attention has been paid by agricultural economists to the factors responsible for income variation. While the USDA's income statistics for commercial family operated farms may not be representative of all families that consider themselves commercial farmers, they do serve to emphasize an important point, notably that the information available is not complete and detailed enough that legitimate comparisons can be made between farm and non-farm income. If one were to include the non-commercial farmer, who

TABLE 3  
*Farm Income and Related County and State Data, Western  
Sugar Beet Producing Areas*

County or State	Beets as a Per Cent of Irrigated Cropland Harvested	Median Farm Income
	(1)	(2)
Alameda	15	\$2,542
Sacramento	14	2,272
San Benito	14	2,211
Yolo	25	2,089
California		<hr/> 2,323
Morgan	15	2,194
Weld	17	2,499
Colorado		<hr/> 2,182
Keith	14	2,575
Morrill	10	2,353
Scotts Bluff	13	2,284
Nebraska		<hr/> 2,182
Canyon	12	2,445
Franklin	13	2,448
Minidoka	10	2,390
Idaho		<hr/> 2,394

lowers the average income of all farmers, in the non-farm class, as has been suggested might be done by Warburton and individuals in charge of constructing the Department of Commerce's non-farm income distribution, since many of these families obtain most of their cash income from non-farm sources, much of the income disparity between the two sectors would disappear. If further adjustments in the data were made to allow for transitory factors such as weather, for differences in inherited and acquired wealth, for differences in income due to age, sex, race, population concentration, regional growth, capital invested in education professional training, a valuation of farm products consumed at retail rather than at the farm, and for differences in ability and specialized talents, it might well turn out that commercial farmers are in general financially better off than their appropriate city counterpart, that they are, in fact, paying no special price for the benefit alleged to be associated with an agrarian way of life. Viewed from this perspective,

the farm problem might well collapse into more general problems of economic and social adjustment immune to correction by farm price manipulation.

The impact of technological advance on different enterprise types and different geographical regions makes the adjustment problem even more difficult in a dynamic sense, since the various enterprises and regions are affected differently. One has merely to observe the behavior of the input per unit of output series developed by the Department of Agriculture for their commercial, family-operated farms to note the differential impact. The trend in input per unit of output has been markedly downward since 1930 in the Corn Belt, the Kentucky Bluegrass, and the Mississippi Delta. On the other hand, the Southern Piedmont, the Black Prairie of Texas, and the Intermountain regions show no discernable trend in input per unit of output. In a dynamic economy even with stable agricultural prices some areas will be forced to recombine inputs in a more dramatic fashion

than other areas in order to attain income parity vis-a-vis agriculture as a whole and the non-farm sector.

### *The Distributive Effects of Price-Support Programs*

While it is common knowledge that price-support programs do not distribute income equally and hence serve to increase the absolute if not the relative income disparity between farmers, this fact is usually lost sight of by both policy makers and agricultural economists when it comes time to suggest solutions to the farm problem. Cochrane essentially begs the plight of the subsistence farmer who would not stand to benefit materially from a cartelization of agriculture by confining his remarks to the plight of the commercial farmer. On pages 23-24 he compares the average income of commercial farm operators with non-farm families. Other than for D. Gale Johnson's paper on the effects of high level support prices on Corn Belt agriculture,<sup>15</sup> little attention has been paid to the inconsistency between these programs and the equalitarian ideal of a more nearly equal distribution of income. Yet it may be this inconsistency which makes a few farmers wealthy without materially helping the poor farmer that is responsible for increasing resistance on the part of the general taxpayer to the present farm program.

In January 1947 the BAE conducted a nationwide field survey to obtain a size distribution of farm operators' income.<sup>16</sup> The results of this survey give one of the best pictures that may be obtained as to what would be the impact of a general price support program on farms with different cash incomes. Since as a first approximation the effect of a price support program is to benefit farmers in proportion to their sales of supported farm products, a rough measure of the potential differential impact of these programs can be obtained for each income class by computing the percentage ratio of gross cash income

to the number of farms; see Table 4, columns (3) and (6). This ratio essentially expresses the gain to each income class as a per cent of an equalitarian change. A ratio of .50 indicates that the farmers in the income class under consideration obtain only half the benefit that would be obtained if the change in aggregate farm income were distributed equally among all farmers; a ratio of 2.00 indicates that the income class under consideration obtains twice the equalitarian share. The unadjusted survey ratios for different income classes in 1946 ranged from zero, for 7.4 per cent of all farm operators reporting zero income, to 13.87, for 1.6 per cent of the farm operators reporting 20,000 dollars worth of sales or more. Thirty per cent of all farm operators would have received more than eighty per cent of the benefits from a general price support program.

While the exit of proportionately more small farmers from agriculture, enlargement of farm units, and a decline in agricultural prices may have done much in the last eleven years to bring about greater income equality, it is safe to infer that the redistributive effects of price support programs are still far from equal. It is this factor, it seems to me, that makes many economists favor adjustment programs to encourage the movement of labor out of agriculture and to permit a consolidation of the smaller, less efficient farm units; it is this factor which leads the welfare economists to favor a compensatory income payment program, since payments could be related to variables other than output and price. T. W. Schultz has suggested in a speech before the National Farm Institute, Des Moines, Iowa, February 14, 1958, that income payments might be related to the time and effort farm people devote to farming and that they might be offered as an inducement to increase the rate of occupational migration.

Utopian and politically unreal as programs designed to ease and facilitate the

TABLE 4  
*Gross Cash Farm Income, Adjusted and Unadjusted Distributions  
 by Gross Income Classes, 1946<sup>17</sup>*

Gross Income Class	Unadjusted Survey Data			Survey Data Adjusted for Under-reporting		
	No. of farms (1)	Percentage of farms Income (2)	Ratio of (2) to (1) (3)	No. of farms (4)	Percentage of farms Income (5)	Ratio of (5) to (4) (6)
0	7.4	.0	.00	7.4	.0	.00
\$1— 249	15.5	.6	.04	10.5	.3	.03
250— 499	9.8	1.2	.12	11.4	1.0	.09
500— 749	7.7	1.6	.21	9.7	1.4	.14
750— 999	6.0	1.7	.28	5.2	1.1	.21
1,000— 1,499	9.1	3.7	.41	8.1	2.3	.28
1,500— 1,999	6.7	3.8	.57	6.2	2.6	.42
2,000— 2,499	5.2	3.8	.73	4.9	2.6	.53
2,500— 2,999	4.5	4.0	.89	5.1	3.3	.65
3,000— 3,999	6.2	7.1	1.14	5.0	4.1	.82
4,000— 4,999	5.0	7.3	1.46	3.7	3.9	1.05
5,000— 5,999	3.6	6.5	1.80	3.3	4.3	1.30
6,000— 7,499	4.1	8.9	2.17	6.3	10.0	1.58
7,500— 9,999	3.4	9.5	2.79	5.0	10.1	2.02
10,000—19,999	4.2	18.1	4.30	4.7	15.1	3.21
20,000 & over	1.6	22.2	13.87	3.5	37.9	10.82
Totals	100	100		100	100	

adjustments brought about by the technological revolution in agriculture are,<sup>18</sup> they have their appeal.<sup>19</sup> The discouraging thing about them is that by the time Congress and the public are thoroughly educated as to the nature of the adjustment problem facing agriculture, many if not most of the necessary adjustments will have been made.

If the farm population were to continue to decline at the same rate in the next twenty years as it has in the last ten to fifteen years, one can infer that there would be no farm problem, for the simple reason that there would be no farm population. With our eyes glued to the short run, it is easy to lose sight of how rapidly the problem of "too many farmers" is resolving itself apparently without government intervention designed to encourage such adjustment.

While a case might be made to the effect that agriculture has contributed substantially to the general increase in productiv-

ity;<sup>20</sup> that it, more than other sectors contributing to the efficiency with which we produce the gross national product, has been forced to make difficult adjustments on the labor input side, and, owing to the competitive nature of the industry and the inelasticity of demand and supply, has captured a smaller fraction of the benefits accruing from increased efficiency, still it is not all clear that the solution to this inequity is increased government intervention. The demand effects, the quality effects, and the substitution effects, which (according to T. W. Schultz) explain in large measure "the nature and severity of the U. S. farm problem,"<sup>21</sup> and are responsible for a decline in the relative importance of agriculture in an economic sense, are bound to be responsible for a decline in the relative importance of agriculture in a political sense. In 1956 agriculture engaged six per cent of our labor forces, used only twelve per cent of our tangible assets, and contributed only four per cent



to the gross national product.<sup>22</sup> With these percentages declining with respect to time, is it in the best interest of agriculture in the long run to look toward increased government intervention in the market rather than to face realistically adjustments which are inevitable, if the goal of income parity is ever to be obtained by farmers generally?

### Concluding Remarks

My purpose in writing this review has not been to quarrel with Cochrane's prophecy of a cartelized agriculture, but to reiterate the rather obvious conclusion that price support programs generally are poor tools for redressing agricultural incomes. At a speculative level, it may turn out that recent technological developments in nutrition will tend to create a more monopolistic type agriculture than can be created by government intervention. Nearly all the graduates in animal nutrition are hired by major feed companies at the present time. Spectacular advances in poultry nutrition, for instance, have revolutionized that industry, have dramatically changed its location in a few short years, and have brought into being a new system of contract broiler raising controlled primarily by the large feed companies and cooperatives rather than by the independent decisions of several million individual farmers. It is currently suggested that nutritional advances in the feeding of hogs will bring about similar changes. Assuming that the large feed companies are able to maintain control over feed technology and through nutritional advances obtain control over livestock production and marketing, it would only be a matter of time until they would be able to control the production of feed grains in the manner analogous to the way in which canneries are able to control the supply of produce. Cochrane's prediction that circumstances are pushing in the direction of a cartelization of agriculture may turn out to be a valid prediction, but for unanticipated reasons. In either event, the input adjustment problem, which lies at the heart of the so-called "farm prob-

lem" should not be minimized or overlooked.

<sup>22</sup>Willard W. Cochrane, "Agricultural Policy — Recent Changes and Future Implications," *Journal of Farm Economics*, May 1957, pp. 296-97.

<sup>23</sup>Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>25</sup>According to Bressler, (R. G. Bressler, "Farm Technology and the Race with Population," *Journal of Farm Economics*, November 1957, pp. 860-61). "We can recognize that weather, economic conditions and the backlog of technology are non-repetitive factors that contributed to the 1935-55 increase in farm production and that cannot be expected to make similar contributions in 1955-75 . . . these factors may have accounted for ten points of the 1935-55 increase.

"In summary, then it would appear that the real job ahead for American agriculture is not simply equivalent to the remarkable increases achieved during the past 20 years but forty per cent higher than those record rates."

"Essentially it takes time for either consumers or producers to respond to price changes; the adjustment process may be so slow as to bias empirical estimates of the relevant elasticities. Nerlove's work indicates that estimated elasticities of the supply of selected agricultural commodities are more elastic if the adjustment process is taken into account. See, "Estimates of the Elasticities of Supply of Selected Agricultural Commodities," *Jour. Farm Economics* 38 (1956), pp. 496-509. Schultz's discussion of price stability in the *Economic Organization of Agriculture* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1953) also infers that this is the case.

<sup>26</sup>*Income Distribution in the United States, by Size, 1944-50*, a Supplement to the *Survey of Current Business*, 1953, p. 84; *Survey of Current Business*, June, 1956, pp. 13-15.

<sup>27</sup>United States Department of Agriculture.

<sup>28</sup>A correlation between Census land values in 1950 and acreage percentages devoted to various crops is not inconsistent with the hypothesis that the production of sugar beets causes land values to be higher than they would otherwise have been, assuming forage and cereals are the closest substitutes for sugar beet production.

Where:

$X_1$  = Estimated per acre value of irrigated land without buildings, 43 counties, 1950

$X_2$  = Acreage percentage devoted to cereals

$X_3$  = Acreage percentage devoted to sugar beets

$X_4$  = Acreage percentage devoted to seeds, truck, vegetables, and miscellaneous crops

$X_5$  = Acreage percentage devoted to fruit and nuts

$$X_1 = -10.8 + .197X_2 + 1.064X_3 + .747X_4 + 1.665X_5$$

(.38)                      (.73)  
(.34)                      (.34)

The negative constant term and the statistical insignificance at the .05 level of the cereals variable and the sugar beet variable can probably be attributed to the fact that observations are taken all over the 17 western states with no attempt being made to hold constant climatic, soil, water right, rainfall, or other variables which affect yields geographically. A discussion of the theory underlying the above model can be found in one of my papers: Ed Renshaw, "Cross-Sectional Pricing in the Market for Irrigated Land," *Agricultural Economics Research*, January 1958, pp. 14-19.

<sup>9</sup>D. Gale Johnson, "Agricultural Policy," Univ. of Chicago Office of Agricultural Economics Research Paper No. 5412, May 14, 1954, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup>Cochrane, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>11</sup>Taking as an index of adjustment the change in average farm size occurring between 1950 and 1955, one finds practically no change in the average size of tobacco farms. Average farm size as measured by acres in farms generally increased during this period. Only one-fourth of the sugar producing parishes listed in Table 2 had percentage increases in average farm size equalling or exceeding the state average for all parishes.

<sup>12</sup>Census of Agriculture.

<sup>13</sup>Census of Population, county estimates are obtained by linearly interpolating within the median income class.

<sup>14</sup>Census of Agriculture.

<sup>15</sup>D. Gale Johnson, "High Level Support Prices and Corn Belt Agriculture," *Journal of Farm Economics*, August 1949, pp. 509-19.

<sup>16</sup>Nathan M. Koffsky and Jeanne E. Lear, "Size Distribution of Farm Operators' Income in 1946," *Studies in Income and Wealth* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., 1951), Vol. 13, pp. 221-64.

<sup>17</sup>Koffsky, *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

<sup>18</sup>This point is brought out by John D. Black in discussing Lauren Soth's book, *Farm Trouble* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957). See "Dear Lauren Soth: Must We So Nearly Despair," *Journal of Farm Economics*, November 1957, pp. 894-913.

<sup>19</sup>This is a course of action repeatedly endorsed by such economists as T. W. Schultz and D. Gale Johnson in their numerous discussions of the farm problem.

<sup>20</sup>For one of the best discussions of changes in productivity and its relation to agriculture, see: T. W. Schultz, "The U.S. Farm Problem in Relation to the Growth and Development of the U.S. Economy," The University of Chicago Office of Agricultural Economics Research Paper No. 5710, October 12, 1957 (prepared for the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress of the United States).

<sup>21</sup>*Loc cit.*

<sup>22</sup>John D. Black, "Agriculture in the Nation's Economy," *American Economic Review*, p. 21.

# *The Esthetics of the Streamline*

*Is the streamline a natural and promising development in the art of our time?*

HELMUT SCHOECK

CAN NEW FORMS AND BODIES, brought before our eyes by technological development, change our conception of beauty? Years ago a historian and I discussed whether the "technization" of our world could change human sensory experience.

The historian was concerned by the "loss of cultural values," as he and another historian, the late Johan Huizinga, called it. Today, he said, few things come out of the hands of craftsmen. Industrial production rarely tries to combine genuine beauty and technical purpose. The historian went on to praise the simple and true beauty of handmade tools, containers, furniture, and the like, which, he thought, originates from an ancient human sense of measure and finality. The centuries of individual craftsmanship had closed a circle between usefulness and beauty.

I was tempted to accept the challenging statement of this historian who looked at the realities of our age so mournfully. Of course, technological progress meant not always pleasant consequences. Yet is it legitimate to ask whether our world has

become more or less beautiful under the impact of technology and science?

There can be little doubt as to the humble origins of technological production and design. They were awkward and ghastly. The shape of the first locomotives and automobiles, the first steamers and steel bridges offends our esthetic sense. People designing those new means of moving, crossing, and producing evidently did not care about a new age of forms. They simply set forth in their old ways, blueprinting for bare technical ends.

And engineers in those days probably never had a course in art appreciation. They did not care for the pragmatic values of eyecatching forms and surfaces. It took a long time before engineers acquired esthetic ambition. I think they would have developed a higher standard of esthetic design much later if the very nature of matter itself, the necessities of technological materials, had not forced them to consider streamlines and smooth, shining surfaces.

This leads to my thesis. It is man's desire to thrust across land, sea, and through the air with a minimum of resistance—in other words, man's longing for the utmost speed—that caused decisive changes in our system of esthetic values in engineering. We entered the age of stream

lined technology. And, because of imitation, even technological fields, where streamlines are unnecessary, followed the general pattern. It is most unlikely that a fountain pen, a ballpen, a toaster, or a stroller become more effective if streamlined.

But if a man has to design a baby carriage, he may like to think himself an aviation engineer. In many cases the manufacturer—ordering a new gadget to be designed according to the latest lines of large-scale engineering—will cater to the fanciful attitudes of customers.

At any rate, I deem the streamline an esthetic contribution of technology. Imagine a visitor from the last century who would come to see our repertory of forms. The most impressive novelty to him would be the streamline. Means of transport in the air, on land and sea, projectiles, numerous ornamental forms, script used in advertising, all those structures carry one common character, the streamline. It is a pliant smooth form. It has the closed quietness of the circle, together with the momentousness and completeness of the ball, and it has the dynamics of the arrow.

Today, nobody can grow up without becoming accustomed to this new form element. Many toys are streamlined. There can be no doubt that every artist born in this century will absorb this form.

In vain one will look to illustrations of former ages and cultures. Nowhere, it seems, did they know the streamlined body. Of course, it would be very difficult to produce an ideal streamlined body with simple tools. There was, however, one craftsman who always knew the advantages of the streamline: Nature. This probably happened by way of natural selection. Those fishes survived which had the most speedy body. Clumsy animals were at a disadvantage.

Is nature the pool of archetypes for all esthetic forms? It is still controversial whether man can invent a completely pure and new form, not to be found anywhere in nature. In view of the manifold forms

shown by crystals or, under the microscope, by diatoms and other organic structures, it seems rather doubtful. At least the human inventor of new forms has to meet a most efficient competition.

Simple geometric forms served as ornament in ancient times. For instance in the art of Mycenae, about 1600 B.C., possibly the uncomplicated geometric figure was the beginning of art. Some experts trace those basic elements of drawing like circle, sickle-shaped arc, spiral and straight line back to natural objects. The full moon, the sun, the web of a spider—they all showed the circle. The sickle of the moon and horns of animals provided the forms of the sickle and arc. Snails taught us the spiral. Other archetypes of bizarre forms are to be found in the skin of snakes, lizards, butterflies, but even the worms in wood caused by death-watch beetles, or whole shapes of animals, the skyline of a landscape, may have enticed the first artists. The art of China and Japan knows even to use the forms given by the array of a flock of flying birds.

But there is another school of thought. Unlike the theory of the naturalists, it holds that the first ornaments derived from technological forms, created for definite purposes. Such forms are, for example, the wheel, the cross,—and now the streamline. Since it is not really preformed in nature it did not come to the human world till technological necessities called for it. In other words, it was not pure visual perception, as in the case of the sickle or spiral, which brought this form to our attention, but human thought in its most abstract activity, in theoretical reasoning about the most adequate form to meet certain problems of fast-moving objects.

The genetic interdependence of forms in nature, art, and technology is relatively unknown. It is no wonder that esthetics has not yet determined the sequence of values. I do not think, however, that we need to frown on forms of artistic expression even if they were first produced in the laboratory by profane engineers. The stream-



line is most pleasing to the eye. To me it is certainly an esthetic value. And since it came to many fields beyond its original physical place in technology, we may call it a symbol of our century.

The ornamental art of a preliterate fishing tribe might have had some chances to imitate the streamline, but I remember only some vague streamlined ornaments in Viking art. It was up to the twentieth century in its haste to lead the streamline out of the laboratories to all conceivable ways of application.

Of course, the streamline was not the work of a single genius. But are the other basic forms of art? We do not know how many generations it took before those ancient plates or vases acquired their high perfection, both in usefulness and beauty. There, too, technological necessities influenced the hand of the master.

One may find it typical of our technological age that blueprints of engineers contribute new forms of beauty. But this latest development of the Industrial Revolution is not unparalleled. There is another fact to be considered. It is quite obvious that twentieth-century art began to show streamlined features *before* the *broad* technological process of streamlined engineering got fully under way.

I remember a semi-abstract painting from the early 'twenties in which a human body in all details within some sort of room was built up solely by smaller and larger streamlined projectiles. Many zeppelins in different colors and sizes formed the picture. Or take Ernst Barlach. Many of his wood carvings are streamlined creatures. They look like anthropomorphized airplanes or racing-cars.

It seems to me that approximately by 1905 Western art began to show a gradual change in esthetic qualifications which coincided with the origin of the streamline. In other words, at the same time when the physicists calculated a streamlined body—to meet demands of modern transport and ballistics—the artists, too, discovered new ways of sculpturing, drawing, and painting

whereby the eye no longer is lost in a multitude of detail and curled forms. Now the premium is on compositions wherein the eye can wander along with a minimum of time. If one compares a Baroque painting with a Picasso, a Gothic wood carving with a wood carving by Ernst Barlach, the loss of multifarious forms and surfaces becomes obvious.

In former times it was a slow process to appreciate and analyze works of art. Today there is less richness of single forms. Much in modern art tends toward the streamlined ideal. Most of Ernst Barlach's wood carvings, and those of more recent artists, resemble the contour of fast-flying streamlined vehicles. Barlach, usually counted among the expressionists, carved men and women, tucked in their coats, looking like victims of a storm, true expression of what Barlach anticipated our century to be. The tempests of this age will force man to become like his creatures, streamlined aircraft and rockets. Barlach, by the way, was also preoccupied with storms, and the shape of things and people in their path, as a writer. See, for instance, his essays and fragments titled "Sturm auf der Seine," 1896; "Sturms Heimkehr," 1897; and "Sturm," 1912. Similar are Ewald Mataré's animals in wood, cast iron, and bronze; for instance his "horse."

Astoundingly streamlined shapes were used by Franz Marc even before World War I. Those unconscious anticipations of the streamlined age are more significant than artistic expression in streamlines since the thirties. Brancusi produced a marble fish, seventy-one inches long, in 1930. It is a perfect streamlined body. Also, Pevsner's "Developable Column," 1942, in brass and oxidized bronze, is a variation of the streamline. (Both sculptures are acquisitions of New York's Museum of Modern Art.)

These dynamic and flowing forms in technology and art seem to announce a new, yet very general human attitude toward meeting our environment. Interesting, however, is this doubled necessity.

both in technique and art. We do know why the physicist had to find the streamline. It is evident in plain mathematical formulas. Yet we do not know exactly why the mind of artists went the same way. I should like to venture an interpretation.

D. H. Lawrence considered the ecstasy of speed the main narcotic of twentieth-century man. We know that there are direct relations between perception and movements of our own body. That means, if we see a movement, our muscles, however slightly, tend to reproduce this movement immediately. It is for this reason, I think, that the creative patterns of artists came closer and closer to the streamline formula. Here the fine arts are only complying with the innermost drive of modern man. To comprehend a form which is adequate to our conception of the future means delight. The streamline reassures us of man's most obvious victories, those over time and space.

To grasp conceptually a line, or series of lines, brings pleasure, especially if a motor activity which is in harmony with our own habitual way of acting or longing to act produced the line. The streamlined body entices the lust for infinite thrusting into the future. Thus the streamline is as much a token of our feeling as the architectural forms of earlier centuries represent the "subjective time" of their people.

The completed streamlined body is, on the one end like a ball, on the other it consists of the sharp silhouette of a pyramid. Is it not a suggestive symbol of the contemporary emotional dilemma? Is not much in our lives similar to the streamlined body? We are trying to push forward into the future with a head, over-heavy of accumulated and well-designed things, whereas toward the past our roots are thinning out ever faster.

Friends of perfectionist technology could argue that when products of technology please esthetically, this must be an indication that human nature has adjusted to this kind of man-made world, perhaps much better than we think.

Creating in streamlines is the shorthand writing of the artist. Details, even limbs and parts of the body, are sacrificed in order to condense the entire shape in a single, quick, well-rounded curve of expression. The original human figure is fading away. A new type of nature, derived from technology, appears.

Henry Moore is certainly no lone wolf. Reports from exhibitions in West Germany indicate a similar movement to the "shorthand" sculpturing among younger artists. Basically, the American artistic tradition is much more based on technological forms than the European. However, it is interesting to note that the abstract artists in New York's Greenwich Village tend to go beyond this world of forms suggested by advanced technology.

One can certainly question the future of the streamlined art. It may not have reached its climax yet. But one can already observe a change in the design of cars. Not all companies seem to believe that a car should have a "built-in forward motion" look. And the designer Raymond Loewy was criticized because he advocated, for example, a streamlined soft drink dispenser, though this machine hardly gets to supersonic speed.

While consumer surveys may convince manufacturers of the values of streamlined gadgets for some longer period, the possibilities of the streamline in creative art are much more limited. Ultimately it could lead to a barren art. The streamline is the final answer to one question: how does an object conform to speed? For art it is a blind alley. In the long run art needs a human basis which the rhythm of perfectionist technology cannot provide.

In 1924 Paul Klee concluded his speech about modern art with the tragic sentence: "We [the modern artists] still lack ultimate strength, for no people carries us." Eventually, however, the familiarity of the common man with the streamlined objects of his daily life could influence his attitude toward unconventional art, especially in sculpture.

*Recovering from the opium of the intellectuals.*

## French Conservative Thought Today

THOMAS MOLNAR

*Man has been created by God in such a way that the larger the object of his love the less directly attached he is to it. His heart needs particular passions; he needs limited objects for his affections to keep these firm and enduring . . . I am convinced that the interests of the human race are better served by giving every man a particular fatherland than by trying to inflame his passions for the whole of humanity.*

— Tocqueville

The European Revolution  
(Doubleday Anchor edition)

A FEW YEARS AGO in San Francisco I heard a debate between two college professors, one a liberal, the other a conservative. As the former was more lively and more shrewd, he had no difficulty in cornering his opponent and in having him admit that conservatives are mere stragglers, that their political blood-pressure is low, and that all they want is to slow down the course of history which is boldly, although perhaps somewhat rashly, set by the liberals.

This debate, if nothing else, showed me that the conservative *theory*—which was completely ignored by both debaters—also needs a conservative *tradition* to keep alive,

in times adverse to it, a certain universe of discourse, a terminology, even certain reflexes. Perhaps the greatest obstacle in the way of the present American conservative movement is the nearly complete absence of a conservative tradition *embedded in the history* of the United States, although, as Mr. Kirk has demonstrated in *The Conservative Mind*, there has been no lack of conservative thinkers—but separated from the course of concrete happenings and from the shaping of the public philosophy.

French conservatism is, in this respect, more fortunate. In the course of the country's history since 1789, conservatives have shared, in about equal measure, in the shaping of the nation's destiny, and their periodic re-appearance on the forum seems to follow the peculiar rhythm of the dialogue between Left and Right, a typically French phenomenon. The nearness of May 13th, 1958, relieves me from outlining here the history of General De Gaulle's return to the national scene, and from giving even a brief summary of the events since then; it is, nevertheless, important to note that this re-emergence of the solitary man from Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises was not a *deus ex machina*, but that it had been prepared by a long period of self-interrogation on

the part not only of De Gaulle himself, but also of the best elements of French conservatism. There is, of course, no doubt that the mismanagement of the country's affairs during the hectic and humiliating years of the Fourth Republic was instrumental in the downfall of the regime, and that this mismanagement was, to a large extent, the product of the hesitations, bad conscience, and inner struggles of the center and left-of-center parties; yet it is equally true that without a serious intellectual activity in nationalist circles since 1945 and the resulting self-criticism, the events of May-September 1958 would have developed less smoothly, and the transition from the Fourth to the Fifth Republic would have probably been marred by civil war.

In the following I shall attempt to give a description of the recent and present thinking in French nationalist or neo-conservative circles. This is important for two reasons: the *first* is that, as the *Manchester Guardian* pointed out at the time of the induction into office of the first Cabinet of the Fifth Republic, although M. Debré seemed "firmly in the saddle," international opinion was still worried about "the lack of a coherent neo-Gaullist doctrine" which would give a personality to the new administration; the *second* reason is the almost total lack of knowledge in the United States about the personalities (except, indeed, De Gaulle), ideas, tradition, and aspirations of what is called the French "Right." This Right, insofar as it is at all known, is all too easily identified with Fascism and the Vichy regime; it is denied the capacity to learn from past experience; and it is accused, in advance, of obscure designs, ideological blindness, and utopianism in reverse.

The first thing to understand about the French situation is that conservative thinking is not merely an ideology, but that it is, like its counterpart, liberal-progressive ideas, deeply imbedded in French mentality and fabric of society. This does not mean that conservatism is static: both the coun-

try's socio-economic configuration and its ideological expression on the conservative side undergo continual and serious transformations. Especially since World War II the demographic situation is considerably changing, and, accordingly, but prompted also by many other factors to be discussed later, conservative theory readjusts itself, formulates new questions, and finds answers which strike with their boldness and originality. No young conservative would call himself today a "rightist" in the sense in which many among their fathers' generation did; in fact, the very term "Right" applied to them provokes a shrug, indicating that the old dichotomy no longer has a meaning. "If writing and working for social justice and the betterment of people's condition is a leftist task, then I am on the Left," explained to me Jules Monnerot, one of the "hommes de quarante ans," brilliant political theorist who writes in nationalist and monarchist publications. "Yet it stands to reason," he added, "that no sound society, and hence no progress is conceivable without conserving what is essentially healthy among the existing social forces and traditions."

Let us not forget, however, the witty remark of the philosopher Alain, that one may recognize a man of the Right by his denial that there is a Right and a Left. Indeed, Monnerot and his entire generation of conservative-nationalist persuasion are disciples of Maurras, an eminently Rightist thinker and political theorist. This is at once a brilliant and a difficult heritage, since it imposes the task of constantly re-examining the needs of the day in terms of certain political and philosophical principles which were elaborated in a different period and which reacted against a different milieu. Often the young nationalists find themselves in a position similar to that of contemporary Marxists who, while holding to certain basic discoveries of Marx, must do a great deal of interpreting and adapting. In the case of the modern *Maurrassiens*, the necessity is, precisely, to reconcile their master with Marx, that is to



reconcile a line of thinking which is essentially *political* (Maurras' famous insistence on "*politique d'abord*"), with a pre-occupation whose center is the *economic* phenomenon. If we wish to understand what the best elements of today's French Right pursue, we should imagine it more or less at the *point of intersection* of the two lines, the reconciliation of the political and the economic. This is particularly evident in the writings of Paul Sérant, one of those men of the Right whose influence is most considerable on their own and the younger generation.

The name of Maurras was not always associated with "reaction" and "Fascism." Before 1914, he, like Sorel and Zola, was against capitalism and the industrial exploitation of the workers who, in France more than in other industrial countries, were still attached to the land in the manner of their peasant ancestors. It was only after the war that he came to the conclusion that the Left as a whole was a danger for the nation's survival, and that trade unionism (*syndicalisme*) is a point of left-ist, communist, infiltration. Henri Massis, Maurras' lifelong friend and disciple, writes of this important issue: "The idea and the formulas of a certain type of socialism are acceptable to Maurras only within a national framework, or rather, a monarchistic framework. For Maurras, the political problem cannot be solved by an economic revolution [as for the Socialists and the Communists], on the contrary: the economic problem will only be solved by a political revolution."<sup>1</sup> The latter would bring about an orderly State, a stable society not threatened by class warfare and by those who thrive on it, a reinforced executive—in the person of the King—national honor restored through political and cultural *rayonnement*. Without trying to create the impression that Maurras' thought is limited to these goals, we may nevertheless stop and realize that these aspirations coincide almost exactly with those General De Gaulle has assigned to himself and to the new regime in various speeches and writ-

ings. The readers of recent press reports will remember that he stressed the need for a strong executive power in the violent-tempered and ideologically excitable French society. All rightist thinkers, and all great French leaders from Louis XIV to Napoléon and Clémenceau, have understood this peculiar characteristic of French society and political life.

Are these ideals unrealistic? Do they neglect taking into consideration the democratic bent of the age, the need for popularity, and the emphasis on economic improvements? For one thing, French conservatives, at least since the 1920's, have been repeating that the country's problems, including the economic ones, cannot be attended to by an ever-weakening executive and in a situation in which the "dictatorship of the National Assembly" prevents serious and continuous policies from being put into effect, and destroys the responsibility of Cabinets and of individual Ministers. In this light, it is rather the Left which seems unrealistic: the stubborn hope for Communist cooperation, the fascination with a new Popular Front of the non-Communist Left, the alliance with Communism "so that Fascism should not pass," seriously advocated by a man like André Philip last summer. This incurable nostalgia for at least a contact with the party of Thorez can only be explained by an illusion, namely that the working class is in the Communist camp and that it will remain inaccessible to all other political formations until the Communist Party itself is readmitted into the official community and allowed to play a role proportionate to its numerical and ideological importance.

This set of beliefs was demonstrated by the nationalists to be wrong even before last fall's referendum and elections proved it conclusively. Not only the promise of a strong State sufficed to detach a substantial number of voters from the Communist side, but even the long-range evolution, disproving the prediction of Marx concerning the gradual proletarianization of society, points to the expansion and increasing strength

of the middle classes. In this respect, it is also significant that the worker-priests, who, in spite of their small number, represented an influential auxiliary force for leftist-progressive movements, have also misjudged the situation when they suggested that the Church join the working class, otherwise history would by-pass it.

A third manifestation of leftist miscalculation was to suppose that on May 13th the nation would rebel and, in fear of "Fascism" ushered in by De Gaulle and the Algerian colonels, it would finally clear the way for a sharp left-turn. This expectation was based on a serious lack of judgment: it is true that the nation fervently hopes for an end of the Algerian war which drains its resources and keeps families in a state of anguish. But it is equally true that the young recruit who reaches the shores of Algiers becomes a good and reliable soldier, even if at home he had been Communist-influenced and had condemned the war as a "capitalist-imperialist enterprise."

It is easy to see from these examples that the conservative-rightist intellectuals are not mere remnants of the past, fossils of old glory and grandeur, and that they do not merely float on the balloons of political fancy, far above the solid ground of leftist realism and reform-mindedness. The fact is that, as it has been noted by more than one French and foreign observer, the French nation is split—and has been split since the Revolution—down the middle, and whether we call the resulting two sides Left and Right, Progressive and Conservative, Republican and Monarchist, liberal and traditionalist, one is as authentically French as the other and stands on a similarly firm ground. This division may be traced even in institutions, schools, villages, and small towns: the conflict between *bien pensants* and anti-clericals, the curé and the school master, the "right" and the "left" in the French Academy, the progressivism of the Ecole Polytechnique versus the conservative values of the Law School.

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As I have written at the beginning of this essay, conservative-nationalist thinking in France is not merely an ideology, but rather, and more immediately, an expression of certain characteristic features of French society. In this society there is relatively little mobility, and, as a result, there are no adequate channels of communication among individuals and social groups. This fact explains, in turn, why French institutions are so strongly entrenched, and how they may develop their strong conservative tendencies into "*situations acquises*" and privileges of all sorts.<sup>2</sup> The poverty of communal life, as Professor Georges Lavau writes, reflects a highly compartmentalized and hierarchical society where passage from one level to another is still much more difficult than in most modern nations of the West. Under such circumstances it is quite clear why those organizations which manage to cut across class lines are largely ideological: the Catholic Church on the one hand, and various leftist groups on the other. It is characteristic that this stability (others say: immobility or inertia) of French society is hailed by some conservative Rightist philosophers as the opposite of the "atomization" and "uniformity" of other, more industrialized nations. Thus Gustave Thibon is of the opinion that "the most fruitful and the most lasting exchanges are those established in strongly diversified societies with distinct levels, where it is difficult to pass from one story of the hierarchy to another."<sup>3</sup>

Thibon's view must be understood not only in terms of Plato's concept of social justice, but also in terms of French economic life, industry and agriculture. The absence of mutual knowledge on the part of isolated groups which Professor Lavau denounces, is explicable by the still rural and small-commercial (*boutiquier*) character of a large segment of the country and its population. In spite of the exodus from the countryside, agriculture is still the oc-

cupation of many people, and, if one may believe some experts, the stress in the coming years will be the strengthening of the rural classes in view of integrating them into the national economy not only as producers, but also as full-fledged consumers of the industrial products. Furthermore, the small merchant still has in his hands much of the distribution of merchandise, the latter changing hands about seven times more often than in the more rationalized Dutch distribution-system for example, before it reaches the consumer. Nor is the *commerçant* willing to integrate himself into a chain of small stores (as the small grocers have recently done in West Germany), although he does not cease denouncing the threat of large department stores and the increasingly popular supermarkets. Instead of organizing *economically*, he prefers to voice his discontent through political and ideological channels, as it was shown by the short-lived but popular Poujade movement a few years ago.

Naturally, the economic background and the basic conservatism of French society do not offer a complete explanation of "rightist" attitudes and thinking in a substantial segment of the country's elite. Equally, or more, important, there are certain historical and political factors closely influencing rightist theory. In this respect the central fact to keep in mind is that May 13, 1958 is, in the eyes of nationalist writers, a spectacular answer if not to July 14, 1789, at least to February 6, 1934; on that day, a rather uncoordinated mass made up of members of various right-wing groups, leagues, and para-military organizations stormed the National Assembly in an attempt to bring about in Paris what Mussolini's March on Rome had brought about in Italy twelve years before. The failure of that poorly prepared *coup* (soon after the Left replied with the Popular Front) did not stop vexing the militants of the Right; the ephemeral Vichy regime was not of a nature to appease the memory of the defeat since it was made possible only by another, national defeat, and by

German occupation.

The Gaullist comeback has been different as it has a genuinely French stamp on it, and, moreover, due to the General's personality and exalted ideas, it satisfies the quasi-religious craving proper to French nationalism, whether on the Right or on the Left. Such a nationalist-religious atmosphere surrounded already Paul Deroulède's League of Patriots (1882); for Maurras, the "nationalist premise" was a point of departure to transcend political antagonisms towards a religion of patriotism.<sup>4</sup>

Like all religions, this too aspires to *unity*, and combats what it considers the greatest sin, fragmentation, *émiettement*. It is not surprising to find that the Maurrassian group has the monarchic ideal at its center, as only such an institution may serve this unity, may guarantee, at the same time, the continuity of the nation's policies, and supply a supra-partisan arbitration among its contending groups, classes, and interests. With various ways of expression and imagery, but serving an identical ideal, nationalist writers from Bernanos to Drieu La Rochelle, from Drumont to Pierre Boutang dream of the King's restoration as the closing of the dangerous abyss opened one hundred and seventy years ago.

There is, however, a difference between the nationalism of the last two or three generations, as there is also a difference between the France of 1900, the France between the two wars, and post-1945 France; while the Right, from the proclamation of the First Republic (1875) to Vichy, connects, with an unbreakable mental and ideological link, the idea of monarchy with the France of Saint Louis, Joan of Arc, the medieval France of "peasants and knights" (Bernanos), the present generation of nationalists has discovered the compatibility of King and the modern world. Therein lies the present, more dynamic and concrete attitude of the French Right, and it is this modernism which lends May 13 its quasi-revolutionary significance.

In spite of the peculiar *style* in which

the French rightist-nationalist mind expresses itself, the striking formulas it finds in its flowing eloquence, the tragic vehemence of the speeches, the pride, the fire, and the fever of a De Gaulle, a Malraux, a Debré, the French Right is more than a "*religion patriotique*," or, as its enemies prefer to call it, a "*mystique*."

In a study of the French Right the overall, decisive importance of Maurras' influence must be clearly emphasized. Before him, the French Right was, to a large extent and throughout the nineteenth century, a Catholic reaction against modernism (as defined, for example, by Pius IX in the Syllabus of modern errors—1864), and later, the reaction of the rural gentry and the countryside against the city, the banks, the railroad companies, the mining interests: in general, industrialization and proletarianization. A Veuillot, a Drumont belonged to the old, undisruptedly Catholic France, and they fought on as many fronts as rising democratization and liberalism challenged them.<sup>5</sup>

With Maurras, the French Right entered upon a new period, detached, in a sense, from Catholicism as a *religion*, and developing, instead, a *political* Catholicism.<sup>6</sup> For Maurras, who was a great admirer of Comtian positivism, the Catholic Church was not principally the depository of Christ's message, a faith unquestioned and accepted without reticence; it was that too, of course, but it was also, and very importantly, the only institution surviving in the modern world which is based on *hierarchy* and *order*, and which, due to its own structure, serves as a symbol and guarantee for a similarly built structure, hierarchy, and order in Catholic nations.

It is on this basis that Maurras denounced the spirit of Protestantism: "If in the individual's conscience, which is by nature anarchic, we instill the conviction that he may establish direct contacts with the absolute Being, this idea of an invisible and faraway Master will weaken in him the respect he owes to his visible and immediate superiors. He will prefer to obey

God rather than men."<sup>7</sup>

The Church, then, is the visible image of authority which the most natural political entity, the State, should imitate. The first virtue following from this view of the State is *stability*, in the Mediterranean-classical sense of the word, that is the political approximation of the Greek esthetic ideal and of the Roman genius of statecraft. Throughout his life Maurras fought the Protestant-Romantic sensibility which "favors disorder" over against the classical concept of harmony and equilibrium; he never ceased to contrast the "obscene chaos" rooted in the fuzzy soul of Germans and British, with "*la belle notion du fini*" represented by the Latin-Mediterranean races.

It is not difficult to find the logical connection between these philosophical principles characteristically mixed with a preference for the purity of classical lines, and the anti-democratic stand Maurras and his disciples took on the daily issues of national politics. As Jacques Julliard pointed out recently, for Maurras "the common good of society may be secured only when the citizen [*sujet*] submits to an external will . . . Universal suffrage cannot show the way towards the common good: it even disrupts unity, the first of political imperatives."<sup>8</sup> The highest form of the "external will" is, naturally, the Sovereign, the King, in the concrete situation of France the successor of those monarchs who have "gathered" (*rassembler*) the French territory into one unit. But the monarchy is only the most exalted of the institutions which needs the support of others because only together can they guarantee the stability of the nation and assist the weakness of the individual. The latter is a constantly recurring theme in Maurras' writings and in those of his followers: in contrast to the vacuous enthusiasm of the Jacobin-progressive mentality for the perfectible, rational, and virtuous (abstract) man, French conservative thinkers, as indeed conservatives of all nations, emphasize the weakness of human reason and the natural



tumult of the human soul; while the Left generally urges the reconstruction of society following the appearance of each ripple on the surface of the collectivity, the Right insists on the necessity of strong institutional safeguards against individual and social anarchy, and of a "rigorous moral climate . . . in which the soul of the people is well protected" (Thibon, *op. cit.*, p. 64).

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The ideas of Maurras had penetrated, many layers deep, much of France's thinking substance. For decades, his paper, the *Action Française*, for which he had such brilliant contributors as Léon Daudet and Jacques Bainville, was the focus of rightist ideology, the fortress from which he would issue forth and storm the enemy citadels. Until 1926 when the Church's official condemnation struck against it a decisive blow, the *Action Française* was also the rallying point of innumerable Catholics, young and old, laymen and priests, civilians and army officers. After the threat of excommunication had been pronounced against all Catholics supporting it, the paper lost much of its overt influence, and the movement which gave it its name began to break up into smaller leagues and organizations, unable to resist the Fascist temptation and disjoining, diluting, simplifying the thought of the master.

From 1940 to 1944 Maurras himself remained rather aloof from the Vichy regime, although most positions of command were then filled by men who, rightly or wrongly, claimed to have remained faithful to his ideas. After the Allied victory, he was sentenced to prison. That is where he died (1952), while most of his prominent followers were executed, jailed, or went through some other form of the cleaning-up operation (*épuration*). The justly or unjustly suffered repressive measures kept the members of the Right in a brooding state of mind for three or four years during which there could be no question of rehabilitation, much less of political organi-

zation. Those who voted in the national elections chose as their political shelter the M.R.P., the Catholic party which, as a result, began to move farther and farther to the Right, in opposition to the earlier desire of its founding members. Even so, however, the M.R.P. proved to be only a temporary shelter, and when De Gaulle created the Rally of the French People, the Right-wing voters flocked under his banner.

By then they had also regained their political voice. The cold war was raging on the international and on the domestic scene; the great cleavage in the Grand Alliance—and in the post-war French coalition government—seemed to point at least to the partial correctness of the Right's wartime orientation, that is anti-Communism and the strengthening of Western Europe. When the Gaullist Rally disintegrated in the early Fifties, the Right was sure that its own political doctrines would find a new shape and a new leader.

This new leader, Pierre Poujade, could not be. In spite of his spectacular victory in 1955, and the party-discipline, similar to that of the Communists, which he managed to enforce for a moment, Poujade remained the un-ideological little *commerçant*, catapulted to fame by the post-war plight of other little *commerçants* who had suddenly been stripped of their black-market profits and who ceased to be the important citizens, flattered by their hungry customers.<sup>9</sup>

The leader who now appeared unexpectedly was De Gaulle, for the third time. What does he represent now? And does he correspond to the image that the young nationalists of 1958-59 had created regarding the man and his regime which will lead France out of chaos and humiliation?

One thing is certain: De Gaulle is made of the stuff of those leaders who manage both to imprint sharp personal lines on the minds of intellectuals and masses, and to adapt to new circumstances with surprising agility and supreme cold blood. He is bold and cautious, has principles but be-

lieves in empiricism, displays arch-conservative ways, yet claims to be the only real revolutionary in France. It is this high-ranking officer of royalist persuasion who, in his memorable Brazzaville speech, then in London and in Algiers, announced to all Frenchmen a new era of "prosperity through a transformed social and economic regime;" and it is again he who, in the summer of 1958, has opened the road for a new type of association among the peoples of the French Union.

There is no question that De Gaulle's incredible successes have their ultimate source in his own commanding personality, tenacious qualities, and faith in a just cause. But it is equally true that these successes are symptoms of a change in the social and political climate of France and, first of all, of the self-assertive mood of the traditional Right.<sup>10</sup>

This re-appearance of the Right manifests itself in three ways:

- 1) The post-war emergence of a new middle class;
- 2) The new political consciousness of the Army; and
- 3) The role of the intellectual vanguard, nationalist and reform-minded.

1. "Economic progress," Professor René Rémond writes, "far from confirming the Marxist prediction of a society divided between big capitalists and the proletarian masses, tends to widen and consolidate the intermediate categories."<sup>11</sup> Prosperity which, in spite of governmental bungling, very high subsidies, and an outmoded industrial structure, has finally come to France in the early Fifties, has had the effect of widening the middle classes and of accelerating the *embourgeoisement* of large sections of the proletariat. In contrast to the pre-war bourgeoisie, a rather closed group, the new *classe moyenne* includes a large variety of groups, ranging from skilled workers to university professors. The ideological motivation of this class cannot be defined with clarity; rather, one can say that its constituting groups

find a common platform in their very inertia: social conformism, indifference or even contempt for politics, love of stability: conservative traits. Beyond this, however, their attachment to the values of Western civilization and to Christianity proves to be a very strong deterrent from radical ideas; on the other hand, the fact that they form a much more widely-based class than the traditional bourgeoisie used to do, accounts for their democratic preferences.

The stability of this middle class and the moderation resulting from it, are essential factors in the present situation. The changing governments of the Fourth Republic, with their hesitant social and fiscal policies, left the middle class economically dissatisfied and, at the same time, dangerously exposed to Communist-stirred discontent and eventual revolution. The regime was equally unable to finish the Algerian war which kept draining the nation's resources, threatened to unhinge its tax-system, and left the economy dependent on foreign loans. By 1957, the middle class was ready for a "rightist solution," by backing the man who represented stability, stern fiscal measures, and an honorable end to the Algerian involvement.

2. Perhaps the main reason of the "Left's" defeat in last year's events was the disastrous misjudgment of the Army, an even greater error than the misjudgment of the new middle class. The leftist intellectuals and politicians are still fighting the traditional image of the army-officer, rich, haughty, with a mystical bent, unthinking beyond the narrow horizon of garrison-life and a glory which is no longer possible. Typical of this prejudice, there appeared recently a novel by Pierre-Henri Simon, written obviously under the impact of last summer's events, and dealing with the *crise de conscience* of a young officer, Jean de Larsan.<sup>12</sup> M. Simon leads his hero to his tragic end by showing how he "has allowed the critical spirit and the demons of reflection" grow in him, and how he became finally intolerable for the army

which is the "institution whose strength lies precisely in a total contempt for reflection."

It is true that by temperament, mentality, and education the officers who started in Algeria the movement of May 13 have much in common with the traditional French Right. De Gaulle himself, in his youth, was a follower of Maurras. But during the long years of the war in Indochina they have learned two things: first, that in the twentieth century, concern for the material well-being of the masses is the cornerstone of all policy; second, that to counteract the monopoly that Marxism has secured in this domain (especially in the vast, fermenting areas of Asia and Africa), the adversaries of Communism must adopt the latter's revolutionary technique and propaganda-psychology.

Hence the serious study of Lenin and Mao, hence the books and articles of Colonels Lacheroy and Goussault on the myth of French "presence," which must be promoted at the same time as the substantial and sincerely conceived social reforms. In the September 1958 issue of the *Revue Militaire d'Information*, the chief of staff, General Ely, wrote an article calling attention to the lessons that the army has learned on the battle-fields of three continents, from the Rhine to the Yalu, from Indochina to Suez and Algeria. "For twelve years the army has been fighting in the four corners of the globe, and has come into contact with the great problems and movements which agitate the modern world. This experience has led to long and profound reflection and to the adoption of techniques appropriate to dealing with these problems. While the country was busy adjusting to modern conditions in the economic domain, the army learned its new role, which, in modern warfare, includes activities of an ideological and social nature as well."

When we consider the Army's new, political role in France, we should bear in mind that in Latin countries, whether in Spain or in South America, the army is

never a negligible entity, and that its support or benevolent neutrality is often an important factor of political stability. Moreover, for the last twenty years, during which the traditionally accepted structure and philosophy of democracy have been challenged with increasing violence, routine-loving politicians have had to yield to men representing new ideas and having more dynamism to institute new policies. Thus it is surprising only to the "Left" that the military—the "intellectualized" military, one should perhaps say—try their hands at the ideologies which agitate our times, and that particularly in countries undergoing important transformations, they profit by the discipline and the hierarchical structure which is by definition theirs. That they do not necessarily abuse their power—as the lamenting French Left would have us believe—was demonstrated in Argentina where the army and the navy drove out Peron and turned over the country to a legally elected government.

3. We come now to the group of intellectuals whose books, articles, debates, and political action have shaped the thinking of the post-war Right. The first remark one must make about them is that they do not form a compact group similar to the one which, for more than a generation, had gathered around Maurras and the *Action Française*. This is a source of weakness as well as of strength: weakness because the French Right is, by temperament and tradition, a believer in bonds of loyalty between leader and followers, and has the cult of authority; yet, the vacuum Maurras left has not been filled, and possibly may not be filled. The Count of Paris, pretender to the throne, commands the loyalty of many; the hard core of the Maurrassians, however, has not forgotten that in 1937 he repudiated Maurras, the one man who had done more for keeping alive the royalist cause than any other Frenchman.

On the other hand, the greater mobility of the Rightist intellectuals, not tied to *one* person, *one* publication, *one* doctrine, is

an advantage in a society in which many and widely based classes are to be impressed and addressed now, unlike in the past.

Let us now have a close look at the young nationalists; what are their criticisms of the "system," the remedies they offer; what is their hope for a reconciliation of the nation, a dialogue between Left and Right; and, finally, what is their view of France's position between the two giant power-blocs and the destiny of Western man in the era of mechanization and depersonalization.

### *The Critique*

The largest and heaviest of the artillery pieces of criticism is unmistakably directed at the system of political parties. This is what the publicists and orators of May 13th meant when they harangued their followers about the evils of the regime in which parties have become, instead of attentive representatives of the nation's interests, bastions of self-seeking politicians, engaged in a game from which the non-initiated are a priori excluded.

The *party* as an institution is denounced for disrupting the almost mystical unity which is a sacred concept in the nationalists' political vocabulary, since it is a reminder of monarchical rule. It seems, however, that the Right overlooks the existence of two trends in the monarchical past: the medieval regionalism, and the strong centralization which did not begin, as it is often asserted, by the French Revolution, but with the seventeenth century. It is true, by the same token, that, as Jules Monnerot writes, the farther France moves from the Old Regime in time, the weaker the executive power and the stronger the forces of disunity.

The institution of political parties is scrutinized by Pierre Boutang, one of the most influential of the young nationalists, editor of the weekly *La Nation Française*. He sees a straight line from Jacobin to Marxist philosophy along which the concrete man becomes "man in general," an

abstract notion compatible with the disappearance of the structured society. Today, when the centralized power has definitely absorbed particularisms and class- or group-responsibilities, the homogenized society is no longer protected against the strongest groups which pass power to one another in the name of ideological slogans and half-truths.

Ideology is, of course, a much-reviled term. It is admitted that democracy could work on a corporative basis, that is if the concrete interests of regions, professions, corporations, and families could find, within the democratic framework, an authentic expression on the nation's forum; the same democracy, on the other hand, is a painfully endured sham when power is in the hands of political parties with an ideological foundation and justification. As Monnerot explains, in a party-system the voter must accept a package-deal, in other words, he must vote not only for or against what has a direct interest to him and in regard to what he feels competent, but for a whole party-platform, concocted by the party-ideologies. In this way, for example, Catholic voters who wished to protect their right to continue sending their children to private schools, had to cast their votes, at the same time, for the European Defense Community also whether they approved it or not, simply because the M.R.P. had included both issues in its program.

Parties, then, fail to be truly representative. Do they fulfill the other claim they make, namely that they are the best and most democratic mechanisms for the selection of the political elite? An editorial of *La Nation Française* (Jan. 7, 1959) refutes this claim: "The parties do not select an elite; they put themselves up as such. They favor those in their ranks who are the most successful in propaganda-campaigns and parliamentary maneuvers: All that one learns in the party school is how to become a good sophist."

The attack on the political party system is extended to include a general denunciation of all the *situations acquises* or



long-acquired privileges in the political, social, and economic areas. We have seen from an earlier-quoted analysis by Professor Lavau how, in France, institutions and positions tend to freeze and become bulwarks of class- and group-interests. Such privileges are not phenomena of economic life only: as Michel Debré, now Premier of France, showed it in a recent work,<sup>13</sup> they are habitually acquired by legal, educational, fiscal, administrative, and other interests, sometimes through deals. The result is invariably the formation of a kind of "general staff" which then blocks attempts at innovation and structural change coming from below or from other sources, and develops a feudal mentality. The "System," according to Debré, consists of the totality of these "general staffs" which he calls "the princes who govern us."

It is these princes, Pierre Boutang argues,<sup>14</sup> who "divide the State among themselves;" since it is their interest to preserve a weak executive, they profit by the popular fear of the "strong man," and succeed in discouraging any change in the right direction. They maintain their hold on the voters through constantly re-awakened ideological conflicts and accompanying passions. From time to time one group manages to secure the monopoly of power; but, after all, the biggest beasts do not devour each other in the jungle: ultimately it is more important to all of them to preserve the vacuum of power, so that everybody should have a chance to occupy it.

### *The Remedy*

About three years ago, the monthly *Bulletin*, which is issued by the political bureau of the Count of Paris, wrote that "the real problem in the conflict-torn country is the reconstruction of the public spirit and of the political cadres." And a few months later, after the January 1956 elections, the editorialist of the *Bulletin* added: "The recent vote is the last warning to the democratic system as it functions now in France." What prompted these statements was that for years about half of

the electorate had been casting anti-regime votes: it seemed that either a Rightist or a Communist solution would impose itself. In the October 1956 issue of the right-wing literary magazine, *La Parisienne*,<sup>15</sup> Paul Sérant spoke of the chances of a dictatorship sweeping democracy off its feet: "If by Fascism we mean an aspiration for an authoritarian regime, then we must realize that there is in France at present a pre-Fascist climate of opinion; people from various classes would definitely welcome a strong executive."

It was taken for granted on all sides that this would not be possible without violence. Revolution was in the air. In the spring of 1958, Jules Monnerot wrote in a slim but well-packed brochure: "In France since 1789 there has been only one way of revising a Constitution: revolution."<sup>16</sup> This revolution might be made in favor of a strong government, he hoped, the only possible solution by which both Communism and immobilism could be avoided.

We see, then, that the authoritarian features of De Gaulle's "presidential regime" are not merely the General's personal traits: they have been inscribed in the votes of the last ten years and on the pages of many serious political writers. How can the parliamentary system still survive? It is quite true that on the extreme Right, in the circles where *Rivarol* and *Aspects de la France* are published and read, the party-system, even with a less powerful National Assembly, is urged to disappear. But responsible nationalist writers, as I have said before, have made their peace with democracy provided that it become more representative on the level of professions, families, regions, labor unions, and other corporate bodies. "The danger today," writes *La Nation Française* (Jan. 14, 1959), "is less a revived parliamentarism than the inability of the Assembly to become truly representative."

What would be, what are the tasks of the Right in a reformed and strengthened State? In his contribution to the *La Parisienne* survey, Boutang recommended that

the new Right no longer consider the area of social and economic reforms as an essentially Leftist preoccupation. "Progress," he wrote, "should not be abandoned to the progressives, because they may pursue it beyond the common good. In his contempt for particular interests," he went on, "*l'homme de gauche* reaches a point where his good will no longer has a concrete object; it may happen to him that when he speaks of the future society, he has actually nothing in mind."<sup>17</sup> Another member of the nationalist vanguard, Pierre Andreu, supports the point made by Boutang: the Right has always felt much more at ease with intellectual and political criticism; "from now on it cannot shun the obligation of making clear its stand in the area of economic realities also."

What are the indispensable reforms, reforms of the general framework of the State, which would then be felt on every level? For some concisely formulated answers let us turn to Monnerot's already mentioned little volume. Monnerot sees three important areas:

a) *Reforms for the restoration of the State*. The initial steps would include a reduction of Communist strength and the elimination of Communists from the body of civil servants. The author recommends the adoption of a "statute of political associations" by which the Party and its front organizations could be controlled, and suggests a "declaration of loyalty" on the part of members of the civil service.

b) *Improvement of the political cadres*. Since Emile Faguet's *Cult of Incompetence*, democracy in France has been attacked for facilitating the formation of an incompetent elite, self-seeking and self-perpetuating. Monnerot argues for eligibility based on the possession of certain diplomas, or of experience as business executive, union leader, army officer, etc. (for the National Assembly). For membership in the Senate even higher qualifications would be required: reputation based on works published, presidency of national or regional corporations, etc. The author also declares

himself in favor of a Supreme Court for the arbitration of constitutional issues.

c) *Improvement in the circulation of the elite*. To remedy the sclerosis of the State and its institutions, politics as a profession and career would be weakened. Deputies would be obliged to retire after one term of service in Parliament and skip a term before presenting themselves again to the electorate. But Parliament would not be anyway the only important channel of expression for the nation. Monnerot strongly favors a whole series of new institutions for "economic prevision," for the "study of public opinion," for the periodic organization of "referenda," and the like. By this means and through a more adequate selection in the schools of good minds from all levels of the population, Monnerot expects to pour fresh blood into the hardened arteries of public life, and, by no means accidentally, to surround those institutions which have been fortresses of partisan politics and ideologies, with organizations representing particular interests in a non-political sense.

It is interesting to note in this respect that while the nationalist writers indict the parliamentary system as acceptable to the Anglo-Saxon nations, but unsuitable to the French political temperament,<sup>18</sup> much of their positive recommendations seems to be inspired by Anglo-Saxon, more particularly by American practices. It is sufficient to mention the Supreme Court, institutionalized public opinion queries, and government by "experts."

#### *Towards a Reconciliation of the Nation*

Frenchmen, in their political life and elsewhere, always look for historical precedent. There are such precedents, of course, for class struggles, ideological conflicts, and revolutions; but there are also for national reconciliation and great constructive enterprises. It is enough to refer to Henry IV's reign which terminated a generation-long civil and religious strife, and which transformed the country from an exhausted, enemy-occupied land, full of

dissension—between Catholic *ultras* who had organized the St. Bartholomew and the Protestants, allies of England—into a prosperous and unified nation which was to be most powerful and glorious both in arms and in the arts.

In the spirit of the *Satyre Ménippée*, which was, to speak the modern language, a document drawn up by experts (lawyers) at the end of the sixteenth century, and which showed the way to political peace between the warring factions, the nationalist writers approach now the subject of reconciliation with the traditional Left and its intellectuals.

In an article significantly titled "The new Right has no enemies on the Left," Pierre Andreu reminds the reader that before 1910 royalists and syndicalists had tentatively buried the hatchet. There is no reason, he writes, why the nationalists should not establish a fruitful dialogue with "intelligent union leaders and serious socialists." Indeed, both Right and Left have made, in the recent years, significant concessions from their earlier radicalism, and progress towards a common meeting ground. The mid-century Left knows well the meaning of the *patrie*; it is no longer rabidly internationalist; and it has also learned that on the road to socialism there are many traps. On the other hand, the "young Rightists" are no longer so doctrinaire; they have begun to understand that, as Raymond Aron has repeatedly stated, economic progress in this second half of the century has freed itself from ideological ties, and that people think more and more exclusively in terms of increased production and improved distribution.

It is, of course, true that the "young Right" even of thirty years ago, was not without a social consciousness, its main dilemma being, at the time, how to separate, philosophically and in practice, the need for institutional and economic reform from the cause of Communism. However, like the generation before theirs, that of Maurras, they too were forced to recognize the historical impossibility of such an op-

eration, and turned, in consequence, to extreme nationalist and Fascist solutions. It is an open question whether "reconciliation" will be effected this time; the recognition that "Big Money is neither on the Left, nor on the Right, that it is willing to ally itself alternatively with either" (Beau de Loménie), expresses much too vaguely and romantically the all-time feeling of intellectuals towards their financially more prosperous middle-class cousins. At any rate, it is not sufficient to form the basis of an understanding with the Left.

And, let us ask finally, who would be the person to bring about the desired reconciliation? The most articulate section of the Right seems to know only one answer: the King. But already Dostoevsky who was intensely preoccupied with post-Sedan France, wrote in his *Diary of a Writer* that if the pretender (then the Count of Chambord) ever returned to the throne, he would still remain the "King of a party"—which had made his return possible—but not the King of the nation. Such reflections are perhaps in the mind of the Count of Paris when he pursues a policy of understanding towards all segments of the population and refuses to lean on the self-declared royalists alone.

### *The Right and the International Problems*

The problems of the international situation are presented to France under three aspects: a) the country's position vis-à-vis the European continent and its new, supranational bodies; b) its relationship to French Africa, and Algeria in particular; c) its place in the world-system, between the United States and Soviet Russia.

As with every other problem, the Right starts here too from some basic realities and definitions. In this case it is the definition of the sovereign State and the responsibilities sovereignty entails. True to its mentality, says Pierre Boutang, the Left ignores today the concept of the sovereign nation, and while it believes, against all evidence, in the soon-to-come withering away (*dépérissement*) of the State, it es-

pouses, with the usual uncritical sentimentalism, the idea of world government. On this issue, of course, the nationalists refuse to bargain or enter into compromises; years ago, Jacques Soustelle remarked that in an age of intense nationalism, developed by the two great powers as well as by the new nations in Africa and Asia, to preach non-nationalism to the old states of Europe is to urge them to commit suicide. Even Paul Sérant who, as a rule, adopts a more moderate attitude than his fellow Rightists (he calls himself a man-on-the-Right only to be distinguished from the men-on-the-Left), calls upon the leftist intellectuals not to blow hot and cold, not to condemn French nationalistic utterances and welcome these when voiced by totalitarian or ex-colonial countries.

The point Boutang makes is a "traditional" one: no State is allowed to accept the limitation of its sovereignty without a serious breach of promise to its citizens. This does not mean, according to him, the adoption of an aggressive attitude against other States, similarly sovereign: conflicting interests should be harmonized without the sacrifice of national independence. In the particular case of present developments in Europe, it is, of course, no secret that, together with De Gaulle and Debré, the French nationalists are less than enthusiastic about the supra-national agencies, above all the Common Market. What they favor is an old dream of the French Right, expressed by Drieu La Rochelle in *L'Europe contre les patries*, that is an honorable truce in Western Europe, based on Franco-German cooperation, and worked out in the context of the continent's cultural tradition. Several steps farther than Drieu's dream, we find Pierre Laval's ill-fated plan for French-German rapprochement. This seems to be also one of the principal pivots of De Gaulle's policy, carried out in collaboration with Dr. Adenauer.

If the Common Market, in spite of the noticeable reticence, is, nevertheless, accepted, this is due, to a large extent, to the hope that through the assistance of the

participating nations, Africa may be preserved as a political, economic, and cultural continuation of Europe. It is now increasingly recognized in nationalist circles that merely to carry out the plans De Gaulle has announced for the *mise en valeur* of Algeria, will tax French economy to the breaking point. Common Market investment in Africa cannot and should not be averted, the nationalists say, because the alternative is either American economic penetration or Soviet political penetration. That Africa's future must be tied to the European and French future, nobody questions; Jean Brune has even argued recently that the Maghreb's geological structure and geophysical orientation make it a part of Southern Europe rather than of Africa.

A Eur-African system, finally, would be the only possible answer, in the eyes of the nationalists, to the existing power blocs and super-powers. It is no secret that the French Right mistrusts the United States in a political and strategic sense: "When, as a result of many concessions, France becomes a pawn on the American chess-board, . . . the latter's strategy may imply one day the need to sacrifice us," writes François Léger in *Reflexions sur l'indépendance*.

Léger, like his colleagues, warns equally against a United Europe and those of its Jacobin-minded partisans who would like to see a Europe-wide Constituent Assembly convene and abolish national frontiers. They feel that this would cost the continent and its nations their heritage, cultural diversity, their very personality.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, as Léger writes, "a uniform Europe, lulled by self-praise, would fall asleep from boredom until the Cossacks would awaken her."

In this way, Léger gives expression to that traditional, almost instinctive rejection of "thinking big" which characterizes conservatives in France no less than in the United States, indeed the world over. The "large spaces," supra-national communities, long-range projects with only vaguely envisaged outcomes, earn, in their mouths,



only scorn, contempt, and a warning to come down from the clouds of utopia to the solid ground of reality. One may perhaps charge the Right with a contradictory attitude when it insists on France being a first-rate power, jealous of its glory and its "presence;" such utterances, however, are less and less frequent; a Paul Sérant, for example, not only rejects the nationalism *à la* Boutang, but emphasizes "the closest possible union of Western nations," and demands a "common sense" solution for France's African involvements.

### Conclusion

In an already-quoted article, Professor Eugene Weber asks himself whether the French Right will be able to profit by the present confusion and embarrassment of the Left. In answering the question, he states that the nationalists suffer today from the same paralysis which plagued them in the 1920's and 1930's, from Maurras to Vichy. "Maurras and his followers," Professor Weber writes, "never ceased proclaiming their preference for action; but the action to which they are devoted is the absurd action, not the one which leads to concrete political results." And he quotes the pre-war nationalist writer, Ramon Fernandez, who said: "I only like the trains which are leaving."

This reluctance in face of political action may be explained in several ways, but one of its most evident symptoms has been the lack of interest in political organizations and parties. Having denounced political parties as "totalitarian organizations, instruments to conquer the State and to subject it to partial interests" (Michel Vallet), the Right has deprived itself for decades of the best twentieth-century means to do precisely that: conquer the State and govern the nation. Paul Sérant recognizes this failure: "The polemist of the Right, opponents of democracy, are more committed to uphold a philosophical principle than to pursue the line of political action."

The question now is whether the new

Right, the young Right whom Pierre Boutang has called the "men of forty," will be able to change this traditional mentality, to channel its inherent aggressiveness towards forms of constructive power, to abandon the loose organizational form of leagues, circles, and study groups for the more active, down-to-earth, and disciplined political party. Has May 13th, which the nationalists like to refer to as a "revolution," introduced a new era in this respect?

The answer is, naturally, not simple. Maurras has left to the present generation the heritage of *politique d'abord*, but brilliant and profound as this heritage may be, it is certainly no blueprint for action. Besides, as Bernanos said of him, Maurras "was prodigal with his intelligence, but he only showed the hatreds of his soul." This is a difficult heritage to live with.

The influence of Maurras is, of course, not the only one. There is Bernanos himself, and Barrès, Péguy, and Sorel, to mention only those who have shaped nationalist and Catholic mentality in the present century. But with the possible exception of Sorel—whose impact, for this very reason, has been the smallest—these men were far more interested in, and committed to the human being as a *person* than as a *political animal*. "What interests Bernanos exclusively," writes a German biographer, Hans Urs von Balthasar, "is the human person and his integrity; he considers the problem of political systems as secondary."<sup>20</sup>

Thus when the new French Right tries to overcome the handicaps of its tradition and heritage, and sets sail upon the troubled waters of political existence, its own fragility, if not the force of the waves, may easily overwhelm it. But it has very real hopes as well: in France, the great myth that the "masses" are in the Communist camp, body and soul, has exploded: they, like the rest of the population, will support those who promise and deliver a strong government, who give meaning and content to the State, who satisfy legitimate eco-



conomic and social aspirations. This the Right has said for the past ten years, and events have borne out its correctness.

The other hope is that the Right is finally willing to undergo a thorough "modernization." Its stand on the housing crisis (first on the Debré-government's agenda), on school-construction, on the problems of agriculture, on fiscal matters, on international issues, shows clear concepts and a firm grasp, and is inspired by refreshing, new ideas. Nor is the "nationalist" label something that other nations, near and far, would have to regard with apprehension: today, with the heavy clouds of a sentimental and inarticulate internationalism descending upon us, it is an elementary duty of the thinking few to preserve a nation's idea of itself and not to let it be diluted in a formless collectivistic doctrine. Nationalism so understood is not a threat: it is a measure of self-defense of our civilization.

<sup>1</sup>*Maurras et son temps*, II, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>"Possessing classes in France are often full of mistrust and are not dynamic; they think more of preserving than of developing; of maintaining the status quo rather than allow for transformations." Paul Serant, *Ou va la Droite?*, p. 33 (1958).

<sup>3</sup>*What Ails Mankind?*, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup>Raoul Girardet, "Pour une introduction à l'histoire du nationalisme français". *Revue française de la science politique*, summer 1958.

<sup>5</sup>For the period in question, see Philip Spencer, *Politics of Belief in 19th Century France* (1954).

<sup>6</sup>In this respect Maurras was the disciple of de Maistre who wrote: "We may deny or venerate the ideas of religion, it makes no difference; the fact remains that these ideas are, whether true or false, the sole bases of all lasting institutions." In *Considerations sur la France*.

<sup>7</sup>*Trois idées politiques*, in *Oeuvres capitales*, II, p. 88. (1898).

<sup>8</sup>"La Politique religieuse de Charles Maurras", *Esprit*, March 1958.

<sup>9</sup>Of the war-time boom of small groceries and dairies, and the comical arrogance of their owners, one should not miss reading Jean Dutourd's exquisitely Voltairean satire, *Au Bon Beurre*.

<sup>10</sup>Since 1950, Professor Eugene Weber writes, the French Right has reasserted itself, as mass-contempt in the electorate, and in the Army manifests itself against the parliamentary regime. "Nationalism and the French Right", *World Politics*, July 1958.

<sup>11</sup>*La Droite en France*, p. 235.

<sup>12</sup>*Portrait d'un officier* (1959).

<sup>13</sup>*Ces Princes qui nous gouvernent* (1957).

<sup>14</sup>*Ecrits pour une Renaissance* (1958).

<sup>15</sup>The whole issue was devoted to a discussion of the French Right.

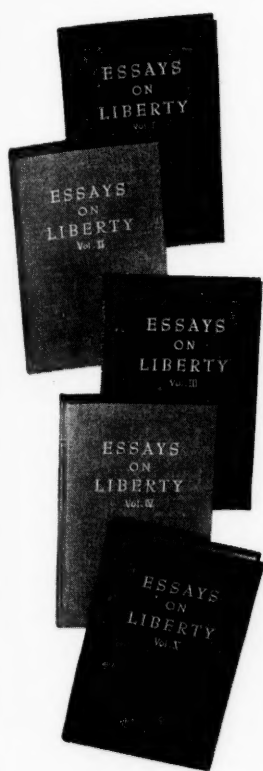
<sup>16</sup>*Pour un gouvernement en connaissance de cause*, June 1958.

<sup>17</sup>As Reinhold Niebuhr said, the conservative restricts policy "to limited and foreseeable ends; the modern liberal's penchant is for too wide and too sweeping objectives."

<sup>18</sup>A notable exception is Paul Serant who suggests that "France develop towards a democratic regime in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the term". *Ou va la Droite?*, p. 130.

<sup>19</sup>Henri Massis is opposed to any kind of European federation which, in his opinion, would be dominated by German power, reinforced and encouraged by the United States.

<sup>20</sup>*Le chrétien Bernanos*, p. 502.



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# *The Conservative Message for our Time*

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

ON A SUPERFICIAL view conservatism might seem an outmoded, obsolete outlook on life. The trend of the modern age has been against institutions and groups that served as props for conservatism in many European countries. Change today is almost invariably from monarchy to republic, not in the opposite direction. Land owning aristocracies have been blotted out of existence in the countries which have fallen under communist rule and have been subjected to a milder form of euthanasia, through ruthless income and inheritance taxes, in Great Britain and other Western lands. The relatively conservative parties which compete for political leadership with avowed socialist and labor political groupings find it necessary to include in their programs measures which would have been considered distinctly socialistic fifty years or even twenty-five years ago.

Conservatism also seems mocked by the accelerating speed of scientific discovery, which brings with it economic and social changes. The dizzy pace of scientific and mechanical progress, so keenly sensed and vividly portrayed by Henry Adams in the chapter of his "Education" which he calls "The Virgin and The Dynamo," has increased to supersonic speed.

Yet, paradoxical as it may seem, it is

just in this age of revolutionary totalitarianism and mass culture, when so many old material landmarks of conservatism have been obliterated, that the essential truths of conservative thought have been most strikingly vindicated. For this is a time of bankruptcy for many of the cherished dogmas and assumptions of liberalism and socialism.

Who can be confident, as liberals have generally professed to be, of the inherent goodness and perfectibility of man in a generation which has witnessed the extermination of millions of human beings in Russia, in China, in areas which fell under Nazi and communist rule, either because of crazy dogmas of racist and nationalist domination or because of equally fanatical fantastic schemes of social and economic reorganization?

Who can plausibly prescribe material prosperity as the sure cure of social evils when record rates of adult crime and juvenile delinquency in the United States go hand in hand with the highest achieved level of general living standards? In the light of the now proved and notorious weaknesses of American public education, especially at the intermediate level, who can parade with assurance the old liberal educationist shibboleths that all children

are equally educable or subscribe to the "progressive" theory that children are best left with a minimum of guidance and control and that basket weaving, clay modeling and baton twirling are just as valuable culturally as the intellectual disciplines that make for precise knowledge, clear thinking and lucid expression?

Is there any more, even among socialist sympathizers, the old serene confidence that the old formulas, "production for use, not profit," "substitution of public for private ownership of means of production," "abolition of rent, interest and profit," and all the rest, are patented means of producing a new heaven and a new earth? Emphatically this is not the case.

There is a most significant lack in Europe of what might be called the metaphysics of socialism. There is a notable lack of agreement among socialists in Great Britain and on the continent as to what they believe, why they believe it and along what lines they should try to advance. As one shrewd British political observer remarked:

"The Labor Party in 1945 won its big victory on two planks, of which one is in place and the other is rotten. One of these plans was the welfare state; and few Conservatives now oppose this; their contention is that they can run it better. The other plank was nationalization; and this simply lacks political sex appeal."

It is noteworthy that many of the assumptions about nationalization of pioneer advocates of socialism have been falsified by the British experience with public ownership of coal mines and railways. The workers feel no sense of ownership, no obligation to work harder. It is just as easy for labor and management to get into a firstclass row when "management" is an impersonal government board as when it is represented by a flesh-and-blood private owner.

Especially in Great Britain, the appeal of socialism always had an element of evangelical moralism. There is a puritan streak

in the Labor Party psychology. This was reflected in the maintenance of rationing in Great Britain long after it had been abandoned on the continent and long after it had ceased to serve any useful purpose except to create a good deal of individual discomfort and inconvenience. One remembers Macaulay's phrase about the puritan objection to bearbaiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.

But it is just these moral hopes that have been disappointed. Institutions have been molded in a more collectivist shape. But individuals have not become more unselfish, more co-operative, more neighborly.

Indeed the modern age has been one of twilight and bankruptcy of utopias. It is sometimes considered a reproach that people in America and Europe are less interested than their fathers and grandfathers were in sweeping schemes of social improvement. No doubt an era of preoccupation with material well being has sins of moral and intellectual laziness to answer for.

But one reason for lack of interest in such schemes is that many have failed and serve today chiefly in the role of accusing scarecrows. And it is in this connection that conservatism has a very real and important message for contemporary man, dispelling his illusions, exposing the shortcuts that invariably lead into blind alleys, showing that the truly good society is never a creation of theoreticians, however glib, or of passing laws and adopting constitutions, however persuasive. It is a slow, organic process, in which experience, intuition, feeling have their place, along with pure reason.

Conservatism can teach men to view with a wary, sceptical eye fanciful blueprints that would substitute some form of world government for national patriotism, that would create a dangerous sense of sham security by concluding with an enemy of proved craft and unscrupulousness a contract that each should disarm, with no effective means of control and verification.

Suspicious from historical experience of the universal validity of broad general ideas, conservatism can play a useful part in pointing out of fallacy of such wellmeaning fantasies as setting up a system of "enforceable world law,"—when there is not the slightest meeting of minds between the communist and noncommunist parts of the world as to what world law implies.

It is a well known axiom of communist philosophy that the only test of what is moral and good is the advancement of the consolidation of communist rule where it exists and its extension to areas which are not under communist rule. The idea of some agency of impartial right and justice settling differences between noncommunist and communist countries simply has no meaning or validity behind the Iron Curtain and it is no accident that the Soviet Government has never in any treaty made any provision for neutral or impartial arbitration.

So it is fantastically improbable that the communist lion will ever lie down peacefully with the noncommunist lamb,—unless on the condition that the lamb finds itself inside the lion. As world government and enforceable world law are completely unreal slogans in an age when humanity is cleft by very deep rifts (one need only think of the fundamental clash between communist and noncommunist conceptions of right and morality and of the similar conflict of viewpoint between colonial settlers and insurgent native nationalist movements) so disarmament on no better security than the word of the Kremlin, honored more often in breach than in observance, is a very dangerous illusion.

This is an age of the twilight, of the graveyard of utopias. Tremendous human achievements in science and invention have been ironically accompanied by appalling failures in the moral field. Utopias are usually rooted in exaggerated conceptions of man's moral capacity. Conviction of man's fallibility is an important element in the conservative's creed. Because of this conviction the conservative will never favor

the placing of a single man, or a group of men, or a government or a bureaucracy in complete charge of the economic fortunes of their fellow men. He will always insist on checks and balances. As John Adams, one of the most authentic and distinguished of American conservative thinkers put it:

"Self-interest, private avidity, ambition and avarice will exist in every state of society and under every form of government. . . . To expect self-denial from men, when they have a majority in their favor and consequently power to gratify themselves, is to disbelieve all history and universal experience; it is to disbelieve Revelation and the Word of God, which informs us the heart is deceitful in all things and desperately wicked."

Given this assumption that a rule of saints is not possible (a utopian illusion common to seventeenth century Puritans, French Jacobins and Soviet and other communists) Adams draws the conclusion that "the essence of a free government consists in an effectual control of rivalries," a conception that found expression in the United States Constitution, with its careful distribution of delimited powers between three co-ordinate branches of the Federal Government and its reservation to the states and the people of those powers not specifically accorded to the Federal authority.

It is true, although it is not realized as widely as it should be, that conservatism in the present age is the surest shield of liberty and individualism. The following citations from the intellectual father of conservatism, Edmund Burke, illustrate this identification of conservatism with individualism and the conservative distrust of the efficacy of sweeping government intervention in economic affairs:

"Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing on others, he has a right to do for himself.

"To provide for us in our necessities is not in the power of government. It would be a vain presumption in statesmen to think they can do it.



"It would hardly be possible to point out any error more truly subversive of all the order and beauty, of all the peace and happiness of human society than the position that any body of men may make what laws they please."

State help can never replace self help, and this holds true equally for extravagant foreign aid subsidies and for handouts to pressure groups at home, of which the farm program is the most appalling example. How easily and almost inevitably government help can turn into government tyranny has been vividly illustrated by the case of Stanley Yankus, a Michigan poultry farmer. Mr. Yankus was subjected to repeated fines not because he had been convicted of any crime in a court of law, but because he thought the right of private property, recognized under the United States Constitution, gave him the right to operate his farm as he saw fit.

Instead of asking to be paid more for raising less, Mr. Yankus preferred to raise his own grain and feed it to his chickens. Because this put him in conflict with bureaucratic regulations he was so harassed with fines and penalties that he finally pulled up stakes and went to Australia, to find out whether he would stand a better chance as a farmer and an individualist.

During the last generation leftwing publicists have tried to discredit conservatism by identifying it with fascism. But there is no warrant for such an identification. Fascism, which practically disappeared after the defeat of Hitler and Mussolini in the Second World War, was an essentially revolutionary movement, much more akin in psychology and methods to communism than to authentic conservatism. One need only recall such characteristics of fascism as the plebeian leadership, the constant appeal to the mob, the contempt for legality, the disregard for the rights of property, the frequent substitution of state for private economic initiative. These are the hallmarks of communism, not of genuine conservatism.

Conservatism recognizes equality of moral and legal rights and of opportunity. It does not believe in equality of ability or stand for equality of income and property. On this point John Adams stated the conservative position very effectively when he wrote to John Taylor of Carolina:

"That all men are born to equal rights is true. This is as indubitable as a moral government in the universe. But to teach that all men are born with equal powers and faculties, to equal influence in society, to equal property and advantages through life is a gross fraud and a glaring imposition on the credulity of the people. For honor's sake, Mr. Taylor, for truth and virtue's sake, let American philosophers and politicians despise it."

The term liberal in Europe still means one who favors private initiative in economic life as well as political and civil liberties. But in America for the last quarter of a century the good ship Liberalism has been boarded by a pirate crew of near-socialists and state interventionists who repudiate every principle of classical liberalism. Historically liberalism has been associated with attempts of the individual to free himself from arbitrary state coercion. But current American "liberalism" would place the individual in a new strait-jacket of state aid and state control, state handouts and state confiscatory taxation. It would completely obliterate the fine picture of the selfreliant individual who accepts state aid with the greatest reluctance, which often recurs in de Tocqueville's classical work on the early American Republic, "Democracy in America."

De Tocqueville, incidentally, is one of the seminal and prophetic thinkers of conservatism. Writing in the first half of the nineteenth century, he repeatedly foresees trends and developments which are much more characteristic of the twentieth. There is, for instance, his prediction of the day when Russia and the United States would each sway the destinies of half the world.

De Tocqueville also foresaw the recurrence of "those hideous eras of Roman

oppression, their traditions obliterated, their habits destroyed, their opinions shaken when freedom, expelled from the laws, could find no refuge in the land." This could scarcely be improved on as a prevision of what actually happened under Soviet and Chinese communism and Nazism. And the brilliant French political scientist seems to have also anticipated the welfare state when he foresaw a type of government that would reduce nations to nothing better than "a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd," that would undertake to spare its subjects "all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living."

The wise conservative will think in terms of applying the eternal truths of his philosophy to the present, not of looking backward to some era of the past, however attractive. For the past can never be wholly recaptured. He will recognize the need of adjustment to political and military change.

For example, the principle of maintaining political isolation from the quarrels of Europe served the American people well when there was a balance of power in Europe, when there were no revolutionary imperialist powers, seeking to expand by every means from military force and threat of force to internal subversion, and when the range of weapons was infinitely less formidable than it is to-day.

Now a reversion to American isolationism could only serve communist purposes and objectives. Take our weight out of the scales of world power and there would be nothing to check the onrush of Soviet and Chinese communism in Europe and Asia. This, in turn, would open up for America the grim prospect of becoming a garrison state, forced to assume an almost unimaginable burden of military and industrial effort, probably with conscription both of labor and of property, for mere elementary survival. That is why it is not a sentimental whim, but an imperative dictate of national interest to preserve and strengthen our alliances with likeminded peoples for the

common purpose of resisting communist expansion.

The conservative is almost by definition a patriot, respectful of the national heritage of great deeds and great thoughts handed down from the past. This does not mean that he is a chauvinist or imperialist. He sees in communism both a grave political threat and a less tangible but perhaps more insidious moral danger. Communism denies all the values of our Judaeo-Christian and Greco-Roman spiritual and intellectual inheritance. It is a poison that would destroy and corrode our national spirit.

Open active advocacy of communism as a superior way of life is at a low ebb, although highly exaggerated evaluations of Soviet economic and educational achievement are not uncommon. There is, however, a dangerous amount of indifference, complacency and favoring of retreat and appeasement under such beguiling names as flexibility and realism. Somehow those who recommend these alleged virtues always come to the conclusion that it is we and our allies who must give in, never the communists.

While the conservative does not set up a standardized creed or pattern of belief he will usually cherish certain values in fields apart from politics and economics. In morals he will take his stand with the prophets and great religious teachers who agree on the importance and validity of the individual's conscious choice between good and evil. He will reject the mechanistic theories of Marx and Freud that would represent the human being, with his individual soul, as a mere reflection of his economic circumstances and a puppet of uncontrollable subconscious impulses.

The conservative will consider what a man is more important than how he came to be what he is. He will raise his voice against soft and sometimes downright maudlin sentimentality that often thwarts proper punishment of brutal crime and makes America's statistics of criminality, adult and juvenile, a national disgrace.

In education the conservative will take a

stand against mediocrity and levelling, for the right of the exceptionally gifted child to advance at his natural pace, against the systematic brain shrinking recommended by so-called progressive egalitarian teachers. He will set his face against placing frills, or, at best, hobbies, like basket weaving, clay modeling, baton twirling, car driving and the so-called "life adjustment" courses on a par with the basic intellectual disciplines.

The conservative will cherish classical values in literature, music and art. He will not accept obscurity and/or obscenity as the sure credentials of genius. In the concert hall he will prefer chords to discords, melody to cacophony, musical form and harmony to chaotic dissonance. In art he will be sceptical of the aesthetic value of the "abstract" types of painting in which chimpanzees have shown themselves as proficient as human beings. No ape, so far as is known, has created a work of the quality of the Sistine Madonna.

Certain principles are common to conservative thinkers in all countries and all ages. Lord Falkland's aphorism, "When it is not necessary to change it is necessary not to change" is a fair summary of the conservative spirit. But the immediate objectives of conservatism are strongly affected by considerations of country and time. There is a difference in points of emphasis and detail between Burke, thinking in terms of a system in which monarchy, aristocracy and an unreformed Parliament played a considerable role, and John Adams, facing the problem of saving a new republic from the two dangers of despotism and anarchy.

What American conservatives now should seek to conserve and, where it has been lost, seek to restore, is the intellectual and political heritage of the Founding Fathers of the Republic: government of limited powers, with an abundance of checks and balances and a healthy suspicion of an irresponsible and self-perpetuating bureaucracy. It should be a conservative aim to get our economy gradually off the stilts on which it is precariously perched by oppos-

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ing privileges and handouts to special pressure groups, whatever these may be.

Getting the economy off stilts means impartial consistent opposition to tariffs and price-fixing arrangements, to monopolistic privileges and "above the law" status for trade-unions and to the attempt to replace the normal laws of the free market by an incredibly wasteful, costly and futile system of state subsidies and controls in agriculture.

The federal graduated income tax at present levels represents the greatest victory of European socialism and statism over the American ideal of individual opportunity. The evil is enhanced because the same principle is applied in much state taxation. A fifty percent across-the-board cut in federal personal income taxation, to be compensated, insofar as economies in government operations are not possible, by a manufacturers' excise tax would be a most desirable reform.

There are some signs that the United States may be ripe for a revival of faith

in conservative values. The bestselling book on student sentiment in the thirties was "Revolt on the Campus," by James Wechsler, written from a decidedly leftwing viewpoint. The bestselling book on the same subject in the fifties was William F. Buckley's "God and Man at Yale," which attacked the Yale administration for favoring leftwing views in economics and being insufficiently concerned with religion. Student and alumni groups with conservative aims are making their influence felt on a number of campuses.

If American conservatives can obtain a fair hearing for views that are consciously or unconsciously blacked out in many institutions of learning and organs of opinion, they should be able to contribute substantially to the fine ideal stated in the preamble to the American Constitution:

"To secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

For, make no mistake about it, the most dangerous enemies of liberty today are on the Left.



## The Soul Recovers Radical Innocence

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

THE FRENCH WRITER Marcel Aymé has so far published about sixteen novels. Many of them have been translated into English and some of them have come out in the United States. He also wrote a number of plays—*Clerambard*, a very minor comedy, ran successfully for a while off Broadway—more than a dozen children's books and several volumes of short stories. One, *Crossing Paris*, has just come out in New York.

Despite the matchless quality of much of his output, Aymé seems to be underrated in France and little known elsewhere. He does not fit into any of the dominant categories of French literature. He is not *engagé*. Ideologies interest him only as the weather might: he chronicles the effects on people but he does not feel involved in producing either sunshine or rain, or even in analyzing cloud formations as a meteorologist might. More than that, effective ideological passion, particularly passion for social change, is abhorrent as well as ridiculous to Aymé. Passionate altruism, he suspects, is the refuge of an insufficient or disordered Ego, often the revenge of the emotionally impotent or perverted. And he dreads the occasion it offers for man's natural cruelty to utilize rather than to be restrained by collective action.

Aymé sees revolutionaries replace the

bonds of order with the fitful exhilaration of self-destruction, ultimately to be followed by the spent, bleak pitilessness of totalitarian systematics. Too often they are men frustrated by the present and blinded with rage, who have replaced their sight with visions, who vindictively long to cut us off from the past which yielded no present to them, to leave us adrift, seared and boastful orphans, finally to be driven into the future.

In his bitter novel, *The Transient Hour*, Aymé resorts to terse footnotes to trace his characters to their death by mob violence or in concentration camps. He suggests thereby the unrelated and obscenely casual notes which social disorder tacked on to their lives. Here, and in his almost equally bitter *The Barkeep of Blémont*, he finds the cruelty of Nazis and Communists united against humanity. But cruelty is depersonalized, happening almost without malevolent persons, in mob action and through weakness. Aymé sees evil forces but no forcefully evil persons. Evil arises either from an impersonal power or an impotent personality. Compassionately bitter about sentimental humanitarians who would cement a social order only with man's best motives, Aymé makes his starkly Hobbesian view quite explicit in his play, *Vogue la*

*Galère*, where a revolt of galley slaves aided by sentimental passengers and high minded leaders, brings disaster to all concerned.

While disorganization and disembodiment lead to ridicule or cruelty, goodness is alive for Aymé mainly as organic order. When he attempts to depict a purer, more isolated and intellectual goodness, it soon degenerates into something too monotonously sweet to be convincing. In *The Barkeep of Blémont*, Watrin, who wrestles with the powers of darkness in his every sleep, is so overwhelmingly charmed by life and any sunlit day that one suspects his goodness is but a fearful generic longing out of the crushing exhaustion of night.

His detached attitude and his implied criticism of ideological commitments, his insistence on personal loyalties, and his scepticism about progress achieved by political means have earned Aymé the lasting hostility not only of the Communists but also of the French left which is very powerful in French literary life. Since Aymé is not religious enough to be classed as a Catholic writer, he does not enjoy the support of either the liberal or the conservative wing of the literary right, and finds himself isolated. This is true also in purely literary terms. For whereas highly regarded French novelists such as Malraux, Mauriac, Sartre or Camus, write novels to illustrate and propagate their ideologies, Aymé's novels suggest the inadequacy of ideologies. And he is too humane to fit into the schematic "cool" and trivializing counter-ideology of Françoise Sagan.

Aymé's ideal man is *l'homme moyen sensuel*, susceptible to *charitas*, *agape* and *eors*. He fuses emotion with sensation without confusing them and he reflects on his feeling without robbing it of actuality. His skin is his largest but not his most profound organ. He is very much a Frenchman, keeping his inclinations compatible wherever possible, renouncing an appetite only where it cannot be satisfied without disorganizing his life. He is a *père de famille*. Aymé never ceases to contrast the

delicate relationships within the familiar cosmos over which he presides with those of each inhabitant to the outside world.

So French a writer seems to be out of place in present-day French literature. Dostoyevsky and Tolstoi, perhaps Kafka, were novelists of cosmic apprehension. They were possessed by visions which spanned the universe. Salvation or damnation was their nightly dilemma. They saw men confined to earth so that they might transcend it, yearning towards ends beyond. Virtuosi in the extreme, their protagonists were at the poles of virtue and vice or rapidly travelling from one to the other or, at least, getting their transcendental bearings on the way to an extreme situation. These are the writers that seem to influence the "serious" French novel today.

Unlike them, Aymé explores no new worlds, journeys through no hell, longs for no paradise lost. Aymé is geocentric. He strains, if he strains at all, toward a center which is not apathy but the very seat of the *anima mundi*. The celestial horizon serves him only as an imaginative frame for the human landscape with its immanent geography. Yet the *itinerarium dei* is acknowledged as a crossroad. Without ideas of destination, travellers eternally lost would meander in the temporal landscape. But the meaning of the destination is in the journey, a journey on which our own transports must carry us.

Essentially a conservative, Aymé feels that virtue is the proper order of love. He embodies this Augustinian conception in the life and the ideals of the French bourgeoisie and peasantry, in the symbiosis, developed in the nineteenth century and destroyed by the First World War, of individualistic enlightenment with ecclesiastically hedged institutions and mores. There, in moderating each other, reason and piety made life most viable. Constant skirmish kept them in equal religious fervor, and protected the lively and commodious equilibrium they had established; and it offered ideals and grounds for battle to

the tempers that need such absorption to keep from worse mischief.

In Aymé's novel *Gustalon*, a mildly eroded professor retires to his native village to occupy his proper place in the village graveyard. His wife, an urban Catholic convert, is quite rootless. Her religion was to be her haven. But she lives in it and in the village—perhaps in the world—as in a home converted for tourist use and made the more alien by the sentimental mementos of the landlord's family. In the traditional rural landscape the Parisians are pallid, like contentious wizened children, unable to sense life, playing uncomprehendingly with words instead. *The Green Mare* and particularly *Legend and the Flesh* vary this theme which reappears in an urban setting through the Ancelot family of *The Miraculous Barber*.

In *The Second Face*—which has just been republished as *The Grand Seduction* (!)—the hero's face is suddenly and unrecognizably changed; he is miraculously

freed of all the external ties which had confined and thus defined his existence. Yet, after a moment of exhilaration, the hero, as his own *alter ego*, re-establishes his bonds and by discarding the possibilities proffered by his *belle image* becomes himself again. Aymé thinks little of new facades; and his unobtrusive irony is directed at social as well as individual cosmetic operations.

Aymé finds integration, the proper order of love, in the middle range of the well tempered. They are his concern. His scope is narrowed but he gains in subtlety and clarity. The raging of passion, violence and suffering has a numbing effect. The constant high pitch, the stridency of a Dostoyevsky, for instance, often leaves perception inchoate and flattens the elevation which would have defined the moment of exaltation.

Yet Aymé dislikes the indifferent as much as the excessive or disordered. He dislikes the tyranny of the testes as much as the

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detesting tolerance of Valéry's *M. Tests*. He does not tolerate—his feeling is so catholic that no one is burdensome or indifferent enough to be tolerated. Nor is he alienated enough to approach life generically by means of a Sartrean struggle for a Dostoyevskian commitment—not to speak of any political *Ersatz*.

Céline is ineluctably aware of the smell of time and decay, of the *urinae et faeces* between which he was born. That stench is with him, never ceasing wherever he turns. Finally it drove him into an endless night of despair. Flaubert before him had sought refuge behind a tightly knit *cordon sanitaire* of words. Proust insulated himself between the corklined walls of his memory to observe forever *les jeunes filles en fleur* from behind his window shade. Mauriac and Claudel resorted to incense.

These same *urinae et faeces* fertilize Aymé's soil. He feels the natural processes in their crudity and cruelty, and celebrates their refinement and tempering by human charity. Some writers are compelled to betray, in their passionate affirmation of the virtues of nature, the ambivalence of their feeling for what is attractive to them, if at all, as a vice. Not so Aymé. To him human culture is a fertile soil capable, if properly cultivated, of supporting an infinitely varied flora and fauna—wild, domesticated and mythic. In this landscape he plants individuals with reverence as *res vera* and *in dividua*. He is so identified with the metabolic rhythm of time that selection and direction are endogenous, and the miraculous, or the mythological monster, seem natural.

Nominalist to the core, Aymé nevertheless has few equals in incarnating universal realities in particulars. Each person is embodied in actions, in external and internal perceptions, as creature and creator of a social and biological role which is part of

the institutions in which he lives and which live in him. One senses the texture of the social fabric and feels our need to clothe our nakedness in its significance. It is made transparent though we are not allowed to forget the opacity it has when we are actually enmeshed in and confined by it. In the play *Vogue la Galère*, an insurgent sailor, having lost his social role through the successful mutiny, literally disappears into the sea. His shouts for help, almost inaudible in the disorder, are unintelligible to the others. Not even his death can regain the significance his life had lost when he tore and shed the social fabric.

Aymé's soberly vivid images and reflections spring forth spontaneously, fresh and clear like dry white wine. There is not a gratuitous word, and yet no hint of the paring knife. A novelist's style may be compared to the lines which compose a woman's body. Where some women are naturally well formed, supple, and frisky, others work hard to reduce or gain. The effort usually leaves traces; they watch their diets and develop a cautionary approach to their appetites and to what tempts them; they live a denatured life by rule and violation. Others try to improve their lines by exercise; they may develop a muscular and often truculently vigorous approach to life; to follow them is a tour de force; they are single-minded and tough. Aymé's sensibilities are spontaneous and intact—he says everything with unashamed directness and joy in clean articulation. His candor often has a comic effect. One laughs with surprise when the incongruity of our desires and apprehensions is revealed that succinctly. But the comic effect arises from completeness rather than satirical mutilation or exaggeration: the irony as well as the delight spring from the comprehensiveness of a clear and well-proportioned vision.



# The Behaviorist's Persuasion

FRANCIS GRAHAM WILSON

***The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics and Belief***, by Marvin Meyers. *Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957.*

OUR INTEREST IS ELICITED by *The Jacksonian Persuasion* on at least three grounds.<sup>1</sup> It is presumably a product of the new flight of the behavioral sciences; it is also another contribution to the recent "liberal" and literary enthusiasm for the political leaders of the Jacksonian era. On a third ground, it is a very readable book, a fact which commends the author to our future attention. Some comment on the first two points will be in this review article. One wonders, I think, whether in this devotion to the Jacksonian era much is being written about little, and a sense of urgency and intellectual importance is created by the straining of the author with his subject. Reflection on the ideas on some of the leaders of the Jacksonian era pointedly

reminds one of Mr. Robert G. McCloskey's remark concerning American political thought: "The difficulty, to be downright, is that American political thinkers have not often produced works that rank with the best that has been thought or known in the world's intellectual history."

Mr. Meyers begins with a statement of the Jacksonian persuasion or ideology. He is seeking the "major plot expressed in Jacksonian political appeals." Jacksonian thought has become for him a problem in "political communication." Unlike Tocqueville, he seeks to be an empirical reporter of the American scene. As he avows, he is deeply influenced by Merle Curti, David Riesman, Reuel Denny, and others who advised him during his year at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. This Center has been called the "Behavioral Science Monastery," though it is perhaps more leisurely in its pace than life in a monastery of the historical and religious type. But the author is careful also to note the influence on him of some of the more noted liberal

historians, such as Commager and Hofstadter. He writes about ideas, but the evaluation of them is on a simplified level, and the book in general shows a strong sympathy for liberal judgments. It is a behavioral principle that ideas are noted or stated in general terms, and that one does not seek to say whether they are true or false. Ideas are functional and forceful, and they are reflective of interests, classes and groups, but the possibility of theoretical advance outside of empiricism is denied. In other words, an inquiry into a "persuasion" is not an inquiry into the principles of order. One seeks a "type," but not a truth. In the formulation of order, one can sense the conflict between political theory and the behavioral sciences. Existentially, it is the choice of the individual trying to learn political theory while stalled between an intellectuality that is historical, philosophical, and humanistic, and an intellectuality that has been robbed of imagination by the empirical and realistic study of human behavior.

From the formulation of his basic position, the author moves on to a discussion of certain leaders of the movement, some of whom are clearly resurrected from an appropriate historical forgetfulness. Meyers examines the giants with the dwarfs. Tocqueville, Fenimore Cooper, and Van Buren are written about along with Theodore Sedgwick, William Leggett, Robert Rantoul, and other lesser figures. Any political movement is rich in peripheral figures, and few have been more rich than the Jacksonian movement.

On one occasion the author refers to Brancroft's "Transcendental claptrap." If one should ask what is the inarticulate premise through which the author organizes an interpretation of his varied and diverse figures, the answer might be that it could be called Neo-Beardian liberalism, which is to say the examination of the economics of the political man. Or, one might say it involves the construction of molds into which groups, interests, and classes may be poured, in order to create the

ingots of behavioral science. Indeed, for this author property seems to be almost the only common element in either Jacksonian liberalism or conservatism, just as the "monster" of the movement was the Bank which seemed to endanger the property of middle-class Jacksonians. One misses, indeed, a discussion of the intellectual classes, the elites, if one will, and the question arises what difference it might have made in the selection of Jacksonian symbols if intellectuals and religious inspiration had been considered.

Further, it may be asked why the Jacksonians should be considered so progressive, as they seem to be. Meyers makes it clear that democracy had already triumphed before the great Jacksonian political victories. If the liberalisms of the present welfare state are the criteria of the progressive, the Jacksonian adherents of *laissez-faire* and free trade are surely not to be considered precursors of contemporary liberalism. In the end the Jacksonians and the Whigs seemed to come close together, as vitality ebbed from older systems of "political communication," or as the old symbols lost force because of long and deceptive manipulation.

## II

The author has been praised for being well-versed in "the new tools and concepts of the social sciences," and he implies from his time at the Behavioral Center that this study is an example of the new "tools" applied to the study of political ideas. Meyers has written a book that discusses the history of ideas, but it does not engage in a discussion of the symbol and meaning of the existential order. The question one faces, first of all, is this: Is this book the kind we can expect from the scholars who adhere to the revolution of the behavioral sciences, or the new liberalism, or the resurgent positivism of the twentieth century?

Let us be frank: If this is to be the type of political theory book that is produced in view of the inspiration of behavioral sci-

ence, then it would not suffer if Meyers did not know the new "tools" of inquiry into political behavior. It is almost as if a label had been attached to it, just as the label of "liberal" was attached to many things deep in the past after it became customary in the nineteenth century to speak of "liberalism." Still, one thing cannot be avoided: existentially, political theory is both a learning and an evaluation of ideas; it is more than description. If the behavioral approach denies theoretical advance to philosophical inquiry, intellectual history and its subcomponent, political philosophy, will be on the way to oblivion as the center of the study of the science of politics. Meyers' book is, in truth, one of the products of the revolution of behavioral science, and here the political philosopher, Meyers, bows to those who have lost taste for a philosophical judgment of values or an inquiry into the symbols of a transcendental order.

The importance of the behavioral revolution in the social sciences, and more especially in Political Science, is not to be denied. Nor is it to be denied that it has evoked intense controversy, and that it will continue to do so. In other words, there is clearly a long engagement and siege ahead, in which those who oppose behavioralism will become better organized, and Foundations that are conservative and theistic in policy will contribute money to balance the foundational colossi who now provide immense sums for behavioral research.

For a starting point of inquiry into the evolution of the behavioral sciences, one would have to turn to that moment in intellectual history when it was said that social study could be modeled on the procedures of science. Obviously, we deal here with "modern" science, and one may start, for convenience, with the seventeenth century when social thought was inspired by a mathematical and a geometrical model. But it was, no doubt, the inspiration of the Newtonian system which suggested the immediate possibility of a science of morality and a science of politics. Indeed, whatever

the dominant form of scientific inquiry may have been, since then there have been social scientists who believed that this method might be applied to the human situation. The rise of biological science in the nineteenth century, the hypothesis of evolution, the emergence of mathematical statistics, and the intuition of Bagehot in *Physics and Politics*, might be called to witness. In America, there has been a more recent combination of philosophy and science which has given rise to the American apostolate in methodology. The philosophical methods of Charles Peirce and William James were related to emergent psychology and to the principles of evolution found in Darwin and Spencer. "Evolution" in Darwin was a scientific theory, however, while in Spencer it was a social theory, a metaphysical venture, which had little foundation in real science.

In a practical sense, the new social science, Spencerian in tone, had to be factual, quantitative; and in theory it was empirical. For the proof of social evolution was not in theory, but in a naturalism in epistemology to support it. Statistical inquiry was to be the crown of the empirical social inquiry. The legal method, the historical study of political life, the use of biology, the theory of physics, all passed before the imperial demands of radical empiricism and the statistical or quantitative advance. And a strange thing occurred, for it was no longer necessary to refute philosophical doctrines that stood in opposition; nor, indeed, was it necessary to know contrary philosophical views. What one had to have was "a commitment to science," and the meaning of science was defined as empiricism and quantity, for it was only in this way that anything might surely be known.

The new surge in method did not have a name. It could be called simply the "scientific method" in the study of politics; it could be called, by analogy and in recollection of Bagehot, the "physics of politics;" but it was first of all the quantitative method. Yet this was not enough. Soon

after World War I, Charles E. Merriam wrote a momentous book called *New Aspects of Politics* in which it was argued that the social sciences had now reached a point where it was possible to have a reorganized and scientific society. One could use psychology, sociology, economics, anthropology, and, indeed, all of the social sciences, in a grand synthesis which would spell out the new foundations of progress. Merriam wanted to call it "systematic politics," but to him and to the many students who followed him in their optimism it was the new age of the "science" of politics. While none could say that Merriam had a firm philosophical background, none could deny either the great influence he had on the development of Political Science in the generation between the Wars. While there were some statistical techniques in use, Merriam stimulated the emergence of others, and he led younger men to study psychology, Freudian ideas, and the application of psychopathology to the study of politics.

Several notable streams of methodological thought were brought together in the emergence of a new method. There was a revival of the near-forgotten Arthur F. Bentley, who spoke of a *theory* of group pressures and the *practice* of pressure politics or pressure groups as the substance of politics. While those who did not know mathematics or statistics began the study of pressure groups, and began also to interpret all politics in terms of group pressures, the psychological technique took flight in a manner that had hardly been thought possible. First, there was the study of propaganda in World War I, which was led by Harold D. Lasswell (propaganda is now an outdated word; one should say something like the "engineering of consent"); second, the proliferation of "techniques" for surveying the public mind came into play; and third, the whole personality of the human being became the laboratory of the social scientist. The skilled "interviewer" asked projective questions that did not reveal their import, and the private in-

dividual had no longer privacy against the prying student of the psyche of the common man. In 1950 a peak was reached in the publication of the Freudian and ideologically immature book called *The Authoritarian Personality*.

But there has been much more. The construction of "models" as a device in methodology became widespread, and in a non-mathematical form the model attempts to state a series of value-free propositions, that is, objective propositions, which can be used to guide and to analyze the data that has been collected. Game theory and the analysis of decision-making (which has apparently been developed independently of European theories of decision-making) are related to the idea of the model of the given situation. But one of the most spectacular developments of quantitative technique has been in the area of computer machines. It has been said by one social scientist, perhaps on the over-enthusiastic side, that the digital computer will be to the social sciences what the microscope has been to biology. The ordinary social scientist, of course, does not know the "language" of the computers, and he must be taught how to create problems for computer solution. One assumes, of course, the continuation of the traditional quantitative techniques which are related ultimately to mathematics and to mathematical statistics.

On these bases—the Bentleyian system of groups as a "tool" for political study, the rise of the psychological probings of the individual without his consent or clear knowledge, the theory and practice of contemporary value-free analysis, and the dream of the unlimited potential of the modern electronic computer systems—there emerged the concept of the "policy sciences" and then, in more ambitious vein, the behavioral sciences.

What made it possible for the new Machiavellians, the value-free technicians, the new devotees of the Bentleyian and Freudian *ragioni di stato*, to get off the ground and to assault the citadels of academic power, has been the money provided by the



Foundations. The Foundations had long been interested in "method," and about 1931 they began to favor projects which were interdisciplinary, but it was not until the emergence of "behavioralism" that their great chance occurred. It would seem that the vast sums provided by the Foundation liberals for the new techniques in social inquiry have made it possible for the revolution of behavioral science to take place. For the first time in history, social scientists had virtually uncounted sums available for distribution, as in the case of the Ford Foundation and the Fund for the Republic. But other Foundations, such as the Social Science Research Council, were directly committed to the new departure. Some smaller Foundations that have been conservative, theistic, and unsympathetic with secularized liberalism, have sought to counter the new power of the leaders of behavioral science. But the behaviorists have all but captured the seats of academic power, and this, indeed, is the revolution of the behavioral sciences.

### III

How did it take place, and in so short a time? It has come about through the selective control of many of the points where academic perquisites are at stake. First of all, the behaviorists, Bentleyian, Freudian, and survey technicians, have had the ear of the more prominent Foundations. This has meant that research grants have tended to stress quantitative techniques, the training of experts in the digital computer, joint or interdisciplinary research schemes, liberal rather than conservative oriented projects, and to offer support to the secular universities. Such a secularist trend has, indeed, existed ever since the first impact of the Carnegie Foundation. In addition to grants to universities for large projects, it has also meant that the avenues to preferred positions for young men have been in the "Foundation circles" where money for research has been available in the largest quantities. In the second place, the revolution has occurred through the appointment

of staff that has been selected with the advancement of behavioral training in mind. Indeed, one might say that in some social science departments no other kind of person will be accepted. Third, in a number of academic departments the graduate curriculum has been radically reorganized to make room for courses in method devoted to a Bentleyian-Freudian behavioral approach, and to include the emergence of statistical and computer techniques for investigating the behavior and motivation of ordinary individuals. In result, graduate students who earn the Ph.D. will be indoctrinated in positivist philosophy, and in the techniques of the "scientific" attitude. The required "core curriculum" is becoming a series of courses devoted to method and to the relationship of various social sciences, all equally imbued with the epistemology of the "new science." Fourth, and finally, the impact on the publishing houses will be immense, since publishers will understandably not be interested in publishing works that will not be used by those of the behaviorist persuasion.

### IV

The continuing theme of the behaviorist persuasion is that, since values and abstract philosophic judgments are outside of the science, they are subjective preferences and it is impossible to demonstrate them. Science itself is based on empiricism; it declines to make any ontological inquiry; and it is asserted that the conclusions from quantitative techniques provide the basis for conclusions on which policy may be made. Other methods of attaining knowledge are denied or reduced in importance. Intuition, revelation, theistic naturalism, and logical demonstration stand at best on an auxiliary footing, without the capacity to compete with the correlation of experienced data. Aside from the philosophical debate between empirical and other intellectuals, the assumption that a policy science is possible on this basis is replete with hazards. It hardly does to say that



those who make policy find their objectives, values, postulates, or their truth where they will. Social scientists do not always simply carry out what a legislator or policy-maker has determined; they are often policy-makers, and they desire with great energy the right to say which values shall be allocated in public policy. When the social scientist says the derivation of values is outside of the science, it might be said in riposte that the most important aspect of the life of the community is outside of the field of any science of society. The purpose of legislation is, thus, inferior in nature and remote from the truth. If one were to state the problem in Greek terms, might not one say that the behavioral scientists are the new Sophists, the radical immanentists, and Gnostics? They deny the transcendent and any possibility of an order to be based on such truth. In the emergence of behavioral science, we are dealing with the continuation of the great debate which was first firmly articulated by the Socratic-Platonic attack on the Sophistic denial of measure beyond the man.

Yet, there is a possible reconciliation in practice between those who consider ideas and values provable and also as part of the science, and those who rely on technique and merely recognize that values are important in political behavior, while saying that values are themselves irrelevant to the state of the science. The principle of reconciliation is to state without ambiguity the postulates that have been dominant in the mind of the researcher. Techniques are neutral; they provide nothing to judge purpose; they neither prove nor disprove the transcendent order of life. In making postulates clear one is saying what he proposes to use techniques for, and he is asserting clearly whether he believes his judgments that are to be translated into policy are subjective preferences or ideas that are subject to proof on the basis of intuition, revelation, some form of naturalism, or logic. Naturalism, itself, may be found in St. Thomas' observation of human nature, and in the strong empirical

bent found in the Platonic study of the historical order. It may also be found in those who, like John Stuart Mill, were unconcerned with the existence of the Divine order. Even a theist may not be annoyed if the behaviorist makes it clear he is not reading into the limits of his science judgments that are neither to be proved nor disproved by it.

## V

The rise of the behavioral sciences could mean the disintegration of political science. For, first, it may mean that the social scientist, and more particularly the Political Scientist, will cease to represent the public order which supports him. Disintegration comes, as Voegelin has said, when a public order exists in contradiction with the civilizational forces it confronts. In the end either the revolution of behavioral science will destroy the system of transcendent thought that is found in the life of those who cannot be classified as "intellectuals," or a more conservative and humanistic intellectualism will prevail. The symbol is the dialectic of intellectual against mass, where the intellectual become "Sophist" struggles against the *pater familias* as active theist. In a second sense, such a science of politics is destructive because it cannot support the proof of values. In time of crisis it must either desert its position or it must become silent while lesser figures propound the truth.<sup>2</sup>

One is encouraged to believe that the future is not so dark as it might appear. Those who have advocated "the policy sciences" or who have named themselves "behavioral scientists" have often, like Meyers, used the term or lived in the atmosphere of it without being sure of their destination. The liberal has long been an immanentist, who has believed that all things necessary might be found here and now in a material sense. His has been the "spirituality" of the material, rather than the reality of the transcendent. If in time the exclusion of breadth, the failure of

imagination, and the coddling of lack of information that is involved in technique should become clear, it is possible that a new generation may turn to another affirmation of the possibility that a true humanistic and religious social order may be supported by proof. From this there may come a new burst of the theoretical life, and a new profession devoted to the science of politics. For new versions of positivism, however they may be disguised by labels and techniques, are still in nature

the same movements which began the assault on the Great Tradition, and which have proposed its reduction to an inane symbolism.

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<sup>1</sup>The author published a short review of this volume in *The Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, 38 (March, 1958), 372-373, from which some material for this article has been taken. This material is republished with the consent of the *Quarterly*.

<sup>2</sup>Eric Voegelin, *Order and History, Vol. III: Plato and Aristotle* (1957), p. 140.

## Manstein

WILLIAM MCCANN

***Lost Victories***, by Field-Marshal Erich von Manstein, Anthony G. Powell, editor and translator, foreword by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart. *Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1958.*

MONTESQUIEU OBSERVED THAT great commanders write of their campaigns with simplicity because they receive more glory from facts than from words. Field-Marshal von Manstein, who was a great commander, perhaps the Allies' most formidable adversary in World War II, writes with admirable straightforwardness. "This book," he says, "is the personal narrative of a *soldier*, in which I have deliberately refrained from discussing political problems or matters with no direct bearing on events in the military field . . . I write not as a historical investigator, but as one who played an active part in what I have to relate."

Fortunately for his readers who are neither professional soldiers nor military historians, Manstein is often impelled to discuss subjects that are not exclusively mili-

tary in nature; for instance, the character and personality of Adolf Hitler. It is regrettable, I think, that in order to shorten these memoirs to the size "suitable for publication in Britain and the U.S.A." it was necessary, the translator explains, to excise a number of passages. "As most of them were devoted to personal reminiscences, often in a lighter vein, their exclusion was thought unlikely to detract from the book's value in a strictly historical sense." This is probably so, but the non-military observations of the Field-Marshal that are allowed to stand in this edition make one wish that others had not been left out. "In his otherwise coarse face," he writes of Hitler, "the eyes were probably the only attractive and certainly the most expressive feature, and now they were boring into me as if to force me to my knees. At the same moment the notion of an Indian snake-charmer flashed through my mind." This recalls Max Picard's impression that Hitler's face resembled the face of a "dubious peddler of dubious post-cards."

Erich von Manstein was born in Berlin in 1887, the son of an artillery officer who rose to command an army corps. He went

to school in Strasbourg and spent six years in the Cadet Corps. In 1906 he entered the Third Regiment of Footguards. In 1913-1914 he attended the War Academy. After being severely wounded early in World War I, Manstein served on the staff of armies commanded by Generals von Gallwitz and von Below. He fought at Verdun, in the Battle of the Somme, and on the Aisne. During the post-war years he held numerous staff and regimental appointments. He became Chief of the Operations Branch of the General Staff of the Army in 1935, and shortly was made a major-general and deputy to General Beck, the Chief of the General Staff.

On general mobilization in the summer of 1939, when his narrative begins, Manstein became Chief-of-Staff of von Rundstedt's Southern Army Group, with which he fought during the campaign in Poland. In the same capacity he later moved with von Rundstedt to the Western Front. Here he was involved in a furious debate for an offensive plan, in part his own, which was tardily adopted by Hitler after Manstein had been posted away from the Army group to command a corps. He led his corps brilliantly throughout the successful campaign in the west and was awarded the Knight's Cross.

When the fighting in France ended, he prepared his command for the early invasion of Britain. Hitler's failure to plan thoroughly for, and to attempt, the invasion was, in Manstein's opinion, a "big error of judgment." ("If Hitler jibbed at fighting the battle with Britain in the hour most favorable to himself, Germany must sooner or later land in an untenable situation.") When Russia was attacked in 1941, Manstein was made commander of the 56th Panzer Corps and led the armored dash from East Prussia to Lake Ilmen. ("I was not consulted on the advisability and method of conducting a campaign against the Soviet Union.") In September he was given command of the Eleventh Army, which conquered the Crimea and smashed the Russian counterattacks at Kerch. After

Sevastopol fell, he was promoted to Field-Marshal. From then until March, 1944, when he was relieved of command by Hitler, he fought with conspicuous skill and valor in the gigantic battles on the Eastern Front. These, in contrast to the great earlier victories in Poland, France and North Africa, became night marish defensive affairs for the outnumbered Germans.

Hitler's stubborn insistence that nothing once captured ever be surrendered, so as to be stronger than the enemy at a decisive point, made defensive strategy for his generals progressively more difficult as the war went on. At last, under ferocious and relentless Russian pressure, "the infantry divisions were no longer getting a moment's respite, and the armored forces had to be rushed like firefighters from one sector of the front to another." The German troops fought courageously and suffered much, but "the enemy troops themselves, as was almost invariably true of the Russians," Manstein asserts, "fought with great bravery and at times made unbelievable sacrifices."

A German sergeant has set down a striking description of life in a bunker on the frozen Eastern Front in 1943-44: "In the burned-out derelict tanks scattered over no man's land sit Russian snipers with telescopic sights, rifles against shoulders, waiting for one of us to show himself. Day and night and again day. There they sit and wait with the nervelessness and stubbornness that only the Russian has. Their pockets are full of grain, there is an occasional bottle of vodka, and by each is a sack of ammunition. So they sit and wait, Godforsaken—but deadly dangerous—behind two inches of steel in no man's land."

From the beginning, Manstein says, Adolf Hitler underrated the resources of the Soviet Union and the fighting qualities of the Red Army. He based everything on his presumption that the Soviet Union could be defeated in a single campaign. Many Prussian officers who had studied Clausewitz had no such illusion. "Russia,

by the campaign of 1812," Clausewitz wrote, "has taught us that an empire of great dimensions cannot be conquered (which might have been easily known before), and, secondly, that the probability of final success does not in all cases diminish in the same measure as battles, capitals and provinces are lost (which was formerly an irrefragable principle with all diplomatists and made them always ready to enter at once into some bad temporary peace). Russia has proved that, on the contrary, a nation is often strongest in the heart of its own country, when the enemy's offensive power has exhausted itself, and she has shown us with what enormous power the defensive then springs over to the offensive." Clausewitz died of cholera in 1831. When, a century later, General von Blomberg, German Minister of War, wrote the introduction to the fifteenth edition of *On War*, he insisted, despite the many significant changes of military organization and technique occurring over the years, that the basis for any meaningful development of the art of war was still contained in Clausewitz' great book.

Curiously, it was Blomberg himself, according to Manstein, who dealt a final blow to the old army when he urged Hitler to take command of the Wehrmacht—"though, of course, it is open to debate whether Hitler would not have arrived at this solution with or without Blomberg's advice." At any rate, it was Adolf Hitler, "utterly unscrupulous, highly intelligent, and possessed of an indomitable will,"—and not Prussian generals—who directed German military operations in World War II. "His character," the Field-Marshal says, "had as little in common with the thoughts and emotions of soldiers as had his party

with the Prussian virtues which it was so fond of invoking."

Probably the most fascinating chapter for those whose interests are not primarily military is the one entitled "Hitler As Supreme Commander," in which the author deals critically and at length with the dictator's capabilities. Manstein is coldly contemptuous of Hitler's character generally, but he sadly acknowledges certain areas of superiority. "He possessed an astoundingly retentive memory and an imagination that made him quick to grasp all technical matters . . . . There can be no question that his insight and unusual energy were responsible for many achievements in the sphere of armaments. Yet his belief in his own superiority in this respect ultimately had disastrous consequences . . . . What he lacked, broadly speaking, was simply *military ability based on experience*—something for which his 'intuition' was no substitute."

Allen Tate once remarked, in connection with Grant's *Memoirs*, that even a general directing an army "doesn't know enough to write about it without getting access to information which is very difficult to get soon after a war, . . . so he has to do as much research as a scholar does in order to function properly." This is surely true, and Field-Marshal von Manstein, writing a decade after the war, has here done his scholarly work well, despite his introductory statement that he "writes not as a historical investigator." All in all, it would be difficult indeed to dispute Captain Liddell Hart's evaluation of these memoirs as "one of the most important and illuminating contributions to the history of World War II."



## *The Occasion and Need of a Burke Newsletter*

### EDITORIAL BOARD

*Peter J. Stanlis*, English Department, University of Detroit, Detroit, Michigan

*C. P. Ives*, the Baltimore Sun, Baltimore, Maryland

ON DECEMBER 27, 1958, in New York City, a conference on Edmund Burke was held at the annual convention of the Modern Language Association of America. This conference, under the chairmanship of Dr. Peter J. Stanlis, University of Detroit, was attended by the following persons: Fr. Francis Canavan, S.J., St. Peter's College, Jersey City; Thomas W. Copeland, University of Massachusetts; John Fitzgerald, Boston College; Robert Fox, St. Francis College, New York; Will Herberg, Drew University, Madison, N. J.; James Lucier, University of Michigan; George McElroy, University of Chicago; Thomas H. D. Mahoney, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; J. M. Purcell, Duquesne University; Vincent Ryan, Wayne State University; Milton S. Smith, Southeastern Louisiana College; Eldon M. Talley, College of

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The theme of the conference was "The Present State and Basic Needs of Scholarship on Edmund Burke." Papers were read by Dr. Peter J. Stanlis, Dr. Milton S. Smith and Fr. Francis Canavan, S.J. Dr. Bertrand Sarason was to have read a paper but missed the conference because of illness. In the discussion period following the papers several conferees suggested that in the light of the remarkable recent revival of interest in Burke's political thought a Burke newsletter was badly needed. A few weeks after the Burke conference, C. P. Ives, Peter J. Stanlis, and Russell Kirk worked out the practical arrangements which will make it possible for *The Burke Newsletter* to appear regularly in MODERN AGE.

### *Editorial Policy*

The editors of *The Burke Newsletter* will follow a policy of objective reporting of all news pertinent to scholarship on Burke.

We shall include announcements of works in progress, M.A. theses and doctoral dissertations, notices of the publication of books, important articles and outstanding reviews, new editions of Burke's works, cognate studies in related subjects, the teaching of Burke in seminars, lectures on Burke, reports of conferences on Burke, etc. We shall present everything that will give a clear and full picture of Burke studies and of literary productions which are important for a greater understanding of Burke and his times. We hope to pool the efforts of many writers and to include news from Britain and European countries as well as the United States.

In treating Burke's political thought we shall avoid making partisan judgments, and will simply present an objective account of what Burke believed or said. As *The Burke Newsletter* will be read by the intelligent reading public, and not merely by academic specialists, we shall write in a clear and simple style suitable to our readers, with a minimum of scholarly apparatus. We invite helpful suggestions and constructive criticism from our readers. Contributions of materials on Burke should be sent to Dr. Peter J. Stanlis, Department of English, University of Detroit, Detroit, Michigan.

*A Report on The M.L.A. Conference,  
December 27, 1958*

Dr. Stanlis opened the conference with two brief papers: "The Present State and Basic Needs of Scholarship on Burke," and "A Definitive Bibliography of Burke." He pointed out that in 1949, Professor Thomas W. Copeland, in his book *Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke*, predicted that "we are entering upon a period in which Burke will be more actively studied than he has been in at least a century." There were good reasons for this statement even before 1949, because increasingly during the past two decades and more there has been an outpouring of books, articles, reviews and doctoral dissertations on Burke, as well

as new editions of his individual works and selections from his writings. A recent doctoral dissertation by Naomi J. Townsend, *Edmund Burke: Reputation and Bibliography, 1850-1954* (University of Pittsburgh, 1955), reveals that in the last 150 years, up to 1955, Burke has been "discussed in 440 publications, varying from special studies of his character and career to analyses of his thought and place in literary and political history." In the United States, between 1931 and 1950, Burke has been the subject of eleven books, thirty-three chapters or sections of books, eighty-two articles and fifteen doctoral dissertations. From 1953 through 1958 interest in Burke has soared greatly, with the publication of Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* (1953), the Copeland-Smith *Checklist of the Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (1955), Ross J. S. Hoffman's *Edmund Burke, New York Agent* (1956), Charles Parkin's *The Moral Basis of Burke's Political Thought* (1956), Carl B. Cone's *Burke and the Nature of Politics* (1957), H.V.F. Somerset's *A Note-book of Edmund Burke* (1957), Peter J. Stanlis's *Edmund Burke and the Natural Law* (1958), and the recent appearance of Thomas W. Copeland's edition of *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (1958), the first volume of a projected series of ten. At least three other books on Burke are complete in manuscript form and will likely be published in 1959. When we add to these major publications the large number of specialized articles and unpublished dissertations on Burke it is clear that scholarly interest in the great Whig statesman is flourishing as never before.

Two things have combined to bring about this remarkable revival of interest in Burke. The most immediate occasion of the Burke revival was the release of a private collection of approximately 2,500 manuscript letters to and from Burke. This correspondence has lain dormant for almost a century and a half in the archives

of Wentworth Woodhouse, and at Milton, the homes of the Earl Fitzwilliam family. The letters were first made known to scholars in 1938, and were made generally available in 1949, at the Sheffield Library in Yorkshire and the Northamptonshire Record Society in Northamptonshire, England. The historical importance of this correspondence soon attracted many American and British scholars in history, literature and political science. The result has been the beginning of a thorough re-evaluation of Burke's relationship with scores of important political and literary persons, and the re-interpretation of his part in the affairs of England, Ireland, America, India and France. Much "pure" scholarship has been done since 1949, and gradually the new knowledge of Burke will be assimilated and synthesized into an organic whole. Until this process is completed the definitive works which ultimately will be written on Burke will have to be deferred.

The second great cause of the Burke revival is quite apart from the availability of the Fitzwilliam papers. Even during the 1920's, as the anarchy created by the First World War and the Russian Revolution consolidated as political tyranny throughout much of Europe, scholars perceived that what Burke had said about the problems of war, revolution, reform and empire, and what he had written on the nature of justice, social order and civil liberty, contained a wealth of wisdom that was badly needed by contemporary society. The conception of Burke as a political philosopher and defender of "the commonwealth of Europe" has found a rich appreciation in the work of many writers during the past three decades. It is significant that between 1953 and 1958 there appeared three new editions of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, with another edition to appear in 1959.

Scholarship on Burke badly needs a definitive edition of his correspondence, his speeches and his general known works, all of which should be collated with the manuscript materials. The existing editions of

Burke's known writings are hopelessly inadequate. Beyond all this there still remains the problem of Burke's authorship of the *Annual Register*, and of the extensive anonymous pamphlet literature of his era. Not only Burke's own political pamphlets, but the replies provoked by his writings and activities in the controversies over America, India and France have never been systematically listed and studied. The absence of thorough bibliographical knowledge of these primary sources makes much research in Burke closer to inspired antiquarianism than to truly scientific scholarship.

Dr. Milton S. Smith's paper, "Burke's Letters in Future Scholarship," pointed out how the *Checklist of the Correspondence of Edmund Burke* could be used for the propagation of Burke scholarship. The *Checklist* identified 207 published sources of Burke's letters, and 81 manuscript sources, for a total of 7,000 letters between Burke and some 1,200 correspondents. When the *Checklist* was published in 1955, 80 per cent of these letters remained unpublished either in part or in full. The letters are identified alphabetically by correspondent, and also chronologically, and again by a list of locations of sources.

Dr. Smith outlined several uses of the *Checklist* and stressed two in particular. The projected annotated ten volume edition of Burke's correspondence, under the direction of Dr. Copeland, is organized on a chronological scheme. While such an organization assures a unity in time, it works against a topical or biographical unity. Thus, although one of the more important of Burke's correspondences was with Henry Dundas, the letters to Dundas are to be found not in one but in three of the projected volumes. Obviously, the *Checklist* will aid the user of the annotated edition to pull letters together into a topical or biographical unity. Also, since the annotated edition will omit most of the letters to Burke, the *Checklist* will be useful to set Burke letters into their full "in-letters" context.

A second major use of the *Checklist* will be in editing and publishing separate correspondences which fall into natural units. Dr. Ross Hoffman's *Edmund Burke, New York Agent* is a classical example of a unit correspondence; the sub-title, "with his letters to the New York Assembly and intimate correspondence with Charles O'Hara, 1761-1776," indicates the nature of the unity in this correspondence. Dr. Smith also mentioned the utility of the *Checklist* for general research in the eighteenth century, by persons not primarily interested in Burke. The 1,200 correspondents include key figures in two generations of British public life. Their letters to Burke will illuminate many broad areas in literature and politics.

Fr. Francis Canavan, S.J., read a paper called "Burke's College Study of Philosophy," in which he traced out the likely early sources of Burke's philosophical principles. Fr. Canavan pointed out that Burke could have acquired his philosophical convictions from many sources other than his college studies. Yet the range in principles of Burke's "deeply religious yet intensely practical" political convictions was contained in many of the textbooks he studied at Trinity College, Dublin, from 1744 to 1748. Fr. Canavan limited his analysis of Burke's college study of philosophy to five textbooks.

Franco Burgersdijck's *Institutionum logicarum libri duo* (1626), repelled Burke because of its metaphysical speculations and insistence upon strict mathematical logic. Yet Burgersdijck also taught a scholastic thesis which, as a general principle, Burke always accepted, that "there is only one absolutely first cause, namely God." In Burke's second year at Trinity he probably studied selections from another textbook on logic, *Logica, Selectis disputationibus et quaestionibus illustrata* (1618), written by Martin Smiglecki, a Polish Jesuit. Smiglecki strongly emphasized the Aristotelian distinction between speculative and practical knowledge and reason. The object of speculative knowledge is the necessary; the ob-

ject of practical knowledge is the contingent and variable. This distinction between speculative and practical reason was again stressed in a fourth year textbook by Robert Baron, called *Metaphysica generalis* (1657). Baron, who was a professor of divinity in Marischal College, Aberdeen, taught that the speculative disciplines are concerned with the ultimately necessary, and are beyond human control. Practical disciplines bear on the contingent, are concerned with action, and are within human power. Speculative reason judges between truth and falsehood; practical reason judges between good and evil. In his fourth year Burke studied a work by Eustache de St. Paul, a French Cistercian monk, called *Ethica, sive summa moralis disciplina* (1655). According to this text moral philosophy guides human conduct in general and even in universal terms. Prudence is the application of more philosophy to individual actions in their concrete circumstances. Finally, also in his last year at Trinity, Burke probably studied a work by Robert Sanderson, who became Anglican Bishop of Lincoln. Sanderson's text, *De obligatione conscientiae*, consisted of lectures delivered at Oxford in 1646-47, embodying the Thomistic doctrine of Natural Law. "This natural law," wrote Sanderson, "is an impression [on man] of that eternal and archetypal law which is in the divine mind; and is part of that divine image on which man is said originally to have been founded and formed in Genesis I. . . ." Sanderson also taught that prudence did not deny but complemented moral principle.

Fr. Canavan drew no causal connections between the principles of philosophy which Burke read in the textbooks at Trinity College, and the frequent appeals to these same principles in his best known political works. He merely affirmed that a knowledge of Burke's reading in college supplied excellent grounds from which to refute the claim that Burke was an empiricist in his political thought.

# Natural Law and History in Burke's Thought

WILL HERBERG

## ***Edmund Burke and the Natural Law,***

by Peter J. Stanlis, introduction by Russell Kirk. *Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1958.*

IN THE CENTURY and a half since his death, Edmund Burke has never been neglected, but he has often been misunderstood. The man who perplexed and irritated his contemporaries because he refused to be set down as either a Tory or a Whig has baffled later biographers and critics, who have tried to make him into an idealist and a utilitarian, an empiricist and a rationalist, a classicist and a romanticist, a Humean and a Thomist, though obviously he was not quite any of these.

This great diversity of interpretation is surely a tribute to the manysidedness of Burke's thought and to the extraordinary range of his concerns. How, after all, are we to categorize a man who championed the cause of the American colonists against Britain, yet denounced the revolutionaries in France; who operated with a sensist epistemology in his aesthetics, yet thought in organic, holistic terms in his political philosophy; who repudiated "political metaphysics" in the name of prudence, yet insisted on subjecting all prudential con-

siderations to a higher law; who lauded order and measure in true classic spirit, yet was filled with a mystic sense of the living past like any romantic? "Intricate" and "complex" are words Burke loves to use in describing human nature and political life; they describe even more aptly the involutions and complications of Burke's own thought.

It is as a political philosopher that Burke has had enduring influence, and in political philosophy the Burkean paradox may be formulated in terms something like the following: How can a man be an advocate of expediency and an apostle of principle at one and the same time? How can he, for example, excoriate the French Declaration of the Rights of Man as "abstract" and "metaphysical" in almost the same breath that he denounces the French revolutionaries for their crimes against the "eternal immutable law"? Even the most sympathetic interpreters have found themselves confused and exasperated by Burke's apparent changes of front; some, indeed, out of sheer desperation, have set him down as simply incoherent.

It is the great merit of Peter J. Stanlis' book, *Edmund Burke and the Natural Law*, that it takes Burke seriously and tries to find the underlying structure of coherence amidst so much surface contradiction. It is an even greater merit of the book



that on the whole it succeeds. Burke emerges as "complex" and "intricate" indeed, but fundamentally consistent in his thinking. This firm thread of consistency Mr. Stanlis finds in Burke's belief in the Natural Law.

Mr. Stanlis' thesis can best be given in his own words:

It is the thesis of this study that far from being an enemy of Natural Law, Burke was one of the most eloquent and profound defenders of Natural Law morality and politics in Western civilization. . . . Burke consistently appealed to the Natural Law and made it the basis of his political philosophy. . . . It was precisely for this reason that he was opposed to the eighteenth century revolutionary "rights of man" (pp. xi-xii). . . . The Natural Law is fundamental to Burke's conception of man and civil society. As a principle or as the spirit of prudence, Natural Law permeates his view of Church and State and all international relations. . . . But the Natural Law is also evidenced consistently in the negative side of Burke's thought; it supplied the moral and legal weapons for his attacks on various eighteenth century radical theories and innovations, and on existing abuses in government (pp. 231-232).

To substantiate this thesis — that Burke's political thinking, in both its positive and its negative aspects, is grounded in his belief in Natural Law — Mr. Stanlis makes a fundamental distinction, already familiar from Leo Strauss' *Natural Right and History*, between Natural Law in the sense of Aristotle, Cicero, and the Christian tradition, and the Natural Rights doctrine that developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and came to triumph as the ideology of the French Revolution. Whereas the former depends on the conception of a divinely grounded cosmic order of which man is part, the latter is essentially an assertion of the claims of individual man in a world naturalistically

conceived. In classical Natural Law, it is reason which is both constitutive and legislative; in the revolutionary Natural Rights teaching, it is will and interest. The older doctrine is able to take due account of tradition and historical experience; the eighteenth century notion, perhaps intrinsically, perhaps owing to the circumstances in which it emerged, is abstract, schematic, without sense of the endless particularities and contingencies of human life in history. This is Mr. Stanlis' basic framework of interpretation, and it cannot be denied that it serves him well.

Having defined his fundamental categories, Mr. Stanlis proceeds to establish his thesis that Burke was in the full tradition of Natural Law by examining the major aspects of Burke's thought and the most important contexts in which Burke developed his political philosophy — domestic affairs, America, India, the French Revolution. In every case, he is able to show that Burke's thinking operates in a kind of dialectic tension between "equity" and "utility," between the enduring demands of right and justice, defining the ends, and the ever shifting considerations of prudence and expediency, defining the means. But there is a unity in this tension: "equity" itself requires "utility;" prudence itself is a high moral virtue.

That Burke was the sworn enemy of the rationalistic, "geometrical" spirit in politics, and a strong advocate of political pragmatism, is well known; it is at least equally important to recognize that he was able to affirm his political pragmatism without moral confusion only because he believed in something *beyond* pragmatism, and that something was the Natural Law. "All human laws," he insisted, "are, properly speaking, only declaratory; they may alter the mode of application, but have no power over the substance of original justice." It is this "original justice," which he saw as the "charter of nature," that is the foundation of all Burke's political thinking.

But Burke never loses sight of the in-

finite variety of ways in which the "character of nature" finds expression amidst the endless diversities of time, place, and circumstance. Men may indeed have certain "natural rights" which are part of "original justice," but:

these metaphysical rights, entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, are by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line . . . [and] undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections that it becomes absurd to talk of them as if they continued in the simplicity of their original direction.

Burke is therefore unwilling to define what is of the order of nature in abstract, conceptual terms; to do so would be to falsify the human reality. He much prefers to hunt for clues in the historical experience of mankind. "Further determinations [of the fundamental principle of the Natural Law]," Jacques Maritain has stated, describing his understanding of the Thomist position, "are dependent upon the historical progress which is characteristic of mankind. For man is an animal of culture, an historical animal." Burke's position is not very different.

Burke's fundamental political orientation is therefore best described as an historical conservatism. (There is also a doctrinaire conservatism, but that is not Burke's.) It is in man's historical experience rather than in any abstract metaphysical scheme that we can hope to catch a glimpse of the underlying Natural Law as well as of the modifications it must undergo if it is to become operative in social life. The true statesman has a sense of the "grain of history," which defines both the possibilities and the limits of his statescraft. When history is either ignored or overborne in the name of doctrinaire schemes of social reconstruction, Jacobinism emerges, with its ideological fury and fanaticism, culminating in the total despotism of party dogma. Burke knew Jacobinism in its initial form in the French Revolution; we

have come to know it in the totalitarian movements of our time. What Burke has to teach us is therefore today of the most immediate relevance.

Because Burke saw political reality in historical perspective, and recognized that all historical actualizations are bound to be partial and relative, he never tired of emphasizing that "all government is founded on compromise and barter." No one has ever expressed the spirit of Anglo-American politics better than this Irishman of genius. He abhorred absolutes in temporal human affairs as passionately as he affirmed them on the religio-ethical level of transcendence. Knowing man in his finitude and sin, and human society in its conflict and contradiction, he never thought of public policy as the simple enactment of an ideal perfection; responsible statescraft, he felt, was a matter of "balances," of "compromises sometimes between good and evil, and sometimes between evil and evil." The statesman is not a prophet, though the prophet's moral vision is something he cannot do without.

Burke's historical conservatism led him to reject with horror the mechanical conception of society as a human contrivance to be made and remade at will by political innovators. "A nation," he declares, "is not an idea only of local extent and individual momentary aggregation, but it is an idea of continuity which extends in time as well as in numbers and in space. And this is a choice not of one day, or one set of people, not a tumultuary and giddy choice; it is a deliberate election of ages and generations. . . ." Therefore, he confesses he "cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption to consider his country nothing but *carte blanche* upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases. . . ." He was, of course, thinking of the French ideologues, but perhaps he also recalled Tom Paine's clamorous insistence that "every age and every generation must be free to act for itself in all cases. . . ." This spirit of radical innovation in Paine was not very

different from that which animated Rubaud de St. Etienne, who, early in the French Revolution, proclaimed in the National Assembly: "It is necessary to destroy everything—yes, destroy everything—in order that everything may be rebuilt." So easy is it for the idealistic "friends of mankind" to turn into demons of destruction! "Their humanity is not dissolved," Burke notes acutely, speaking of the revolutionaries. "They only give it a long prorogation. . . . Their humanity is at their horizon, and like the horizon it always flies before them."

Though Mr. Stanlis is formally concerned only to prove his thesis about Burke and the Natural Law, he actually surveys the vast scope of Burke's political and social thought, and does so with learning and insight that have already made his book quite outstanding in the field. Nevertheless, a few questions remain to trouble the critical reader. Is Burke's conception of Natural Law, permeated as it is with the sense of historical experience, really the same as that of Aristotle, Cicero, and Thomas Aquinas, who can hardly be considered historical-minded? Burke's own statements are not such as to encourage this simple identification, and Mr. Stanlis' collection of brief quotations on Natural Law in Appendix I, taken from thinkers ranging all the way from Aristotle to Thomas Jefferson, does not much help matters. (Incidentally, why are Augustine and the Church Fathers not quoted?) Another question: Granted that the Natural Law is connatural to man as man, that is, to man in his "essential being," how accessible is it to man in his "existential condition," in the fallenness of sin in which he is actually involved and which alienates him from God and his own true being? Indeed, what remains of the original cosmic order in a fallen world, which is quite literally *deranged*? Finally, is the classic doctrine of Natural Law so easily compatible with biblical faith, whether expressed in its Jewish or Christian form, as Mr. Stanlis assumes? Is not the inner logic of the Nat-

ural Law a logic of autonomy, and by that much secularistic? Was Grotius' separation of the Natural Law from God and divine revelation so entirely contrary to the spirit of the classical doctrine? Leo Strauss, whose thinking Mr. Stanlis rightly finds so sympathetic, has pointed up the problem in a celebrated passage:

Man cannot live without light, guidance, knowledge; only through knowledge of the good can he find the good that he needs. The fundamental question therefore is whether men can acquire that knowledge of the good . . . by the unaided efforts of their natural powers, or whether they are dependent for this knowledge on divine revelation. The first possibility is characterized by philosophy or science in the original sense of the term; the second is presented by the Bible. The dilemma cannot be evaded by any harmonization or synthesis. (*Natural Right and History*, 1953, p. 74.)

Mr. Stanlis does not answer these fundamental questions; it is surely sufficient that his discussion, at one point or another, raises them, as indeed, within the limitations of his thesis, it raises virtually every question of relevance to Burke's moral and political thought.

There is no doubt that we are witnessing a resurgence of interest in Burke in our day. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., himself no "conservative," has explained why. "A time of perplexity," he says, "creates a need for somber and tragic interpretations of man. Thus we find Burke more satisfying today than Paine, Hamilton or Adams than Jefferson, Calhoun than Webster or Clay" (*The Nation*, April 1, 1950). Since all times, I would suggest, are "times of perplexity" demanding a "somber and tragic interpretation of man," Burke has his word to say to us in every phase of our historical experience. We are therefore greatly indebted to Mr. Stanlis for what he has done to help make that word so clear and cogent.

## Burke's Letters

PETER J. STANLIS

*The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, Volume I (April 1744-June 1768)*, Thomas W. Copeland, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.

ONE OF THE GREATEST IMPEDIMENTS to scholarship on Edmund Burke has been the lack of an accurate and thorough general collection of Burke's correspondence. An examination of what has been available will show that practically every eighteenth century literary and political figure of any stature has been treated more justly than Burke. The best single edition to date of Burke's correspondence, the Fitzwilliam-Bourke edition of 1844, in four volumes, is pitifully inadequate. This edition contains only about 7% of the letters to and from Burke now known to exist. Of its four hundred or so letters, only 305 were written by Burke. The crippling editorial policy of not reprinting any letters previously published was a serious error of omission.

Except for the Burke-O'Hara correspondence published by Professor Ross Hoffman in 1956, the other six major printed col-

lections of Burke's letters contain relatively few additional letters, and are not readily accessible. Additional individual or small numbers of letters to and from Burke are also scattered through a total of 207 different publications. Finally, a large portion of Burke's correspondence was not published at all, remaining in manuscript for over a century and a half in the Watson-Wentworth-Fitzwilliam archives.

During the past thirty years, several scholars have done some preliminary work toward the publication of a definitive edition of Burke's correspondence. In the 1930's Canon Robert Murray collected and edited and even printed various letters of Burke, but he died before completing his project. The correspondence between Burke and Charles O'Hara, previously unknown except to Canon Murray, was secured, edited and published by Professor Ross Hoffman as an addendum to his *Edmund Burke, New York Agent* (1956). This collection of 83 letters was the most valuable single contribution of original Burke letters since the 1844 edition. But the real foundation for a definitive edition of Burke's correspondence was laid in the publication of the Copeland-Smith *Checklist of the Cor-*

response of Edmund Burke (Cambridge University Press, 1955). This *Checklist* identified 1200 Burke correspondents, 207 published sources and 81 manuscript sources of Burke's correspondence, for a grand total of almost 7,000 letters to and from Burke. Most of these letters are found in the Fitzwilliam manuscripts: of these, less than 25% have ever been published.

The publication of *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, Volume I*, is the culmination of years of painstaking effort and the beginning of a completely definitive edition of Burke's letters based upon a principle of maximum completeness: "The present edition . . . will include all of Edmund Burke's own letters which survive wholly or in part . . . [together with] abstracts of missing letters when they are full enough to be useful records of Burke's life or opinions." (Preface.) Professor Copeland hopes to publish one volume a year for eight years, each with its own index, capped by an index volume for the entire series. As general editor he is aided by an editorial committee of eight capable scholars, each of whom will "share the work" by being responsible for "one chronological section of Burke's career," to be treated in the separate volumes.

Volume I covers the letters from Burke's sixteenth to his fortieth year (1744 to 1768), and shows an enormous advance over the 1844 edition, from twenty-seven letters to 191 complete and six partially preserved letters for the same period. Of these 197 letters, 176 are printed directly from manuscript, twenty-four of them for the first time. Twelve of these letters illuminate "the most obscure period of Burke's

career," from the publication of his *Vindication of Natural Society* (1756), to his entering Parliament (1765). Volume I contains an excellent brief introduction and a statement of the principle of arrangement to be followed for subsequent volumes. Significant letters by important persons close to Burke, particularly when necessary for the interpretation of Burke's letters, are to be included. All of the individual letters are richly annotated. To appreciate the scope of this editorial project we have but to compare the edition of 1844, which contained 305 letters written by Burke, with the completed Copeland edition, which will total about 1,700 letters, in whole or in part, together with abstracts of important missing letters.

Out of these volumes of Burke's correspondence will come much new knowledge of Burke and the important people, politics and historical events of the last half of the eighteenth century. These letters will do much to enrich our knowledge of Burke's part in many events, particularly of the American Revolution, the second Rockingham administration, important Irish and domestic English affairs, and the entire period of the French Revolution, 1789-1797. To scholars in history, political science, literature, speech and eighteenth century thought, Burke's correspondence will illuminate many dark corners of his era. To scholars particularly interested in Burke, his correspondence is a great step toward a final synthesis of our knowledge of the great Whig statesman, which will make possible the writing of definitive studies of every aspect of his life and thought.



## Burke's *Esthetics*

LOUIS I. BREDVOLD

**Edmund Burke: A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful**, edited with introduction and notes by J. T. Boulton. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

AMONG THE CURRENT SIGNS of a growing interest in Burke must be included the handsome scholarly edition of the early treatise on the sublime and beautiful which has been prepared by Mr. J. T. Boulton, Lecturer in English at the University of Nottingham. It is a work in that strict and thorough academic tradition which aims at finality. The editor presents a critical text, and the collation of the first two editions reveals that the second was revised in important ways to meet the criticisms and objections that had been raised in the current reviews. An elaborate introduction of over a hundred pages, which presents a thorough analysis of Burke's argument against the background of earlier and contemporary discussions of the same subjects, is not only a valuable contribution to the

study of Burke, but also to the history of esthetic philosophy in the eighteenth century. The reader, whether or not he has special knowledge in this field, can easily understand where Burke departs from the paths of his predecessors and appreciate his independence and originality. His little treatise aroused considerable interest, both in England and abroad, and although exception was taken to many of his conclusions, he clearly achieved the modest aim he expressed of stirring the stagnant waters of esthetic theory. The specialist in the history of esthetics will be grateful for Mr. Boulton's careful and informative discussion. One surprising literary connection seems to deserve special mention: Mr. Boulton presents very convincing evidence that Thomas Hardy, admittedly a careful reader of Burke's *Enquiry*, had in mind the Burkean idea of the sublime as he composed his famous description of Egdon Heath in the first chapter of *The Return of the Native*.

As for the general reader of Burke, his interest will probably be chiefly in observing in this youthful effort the early manifestations of those modes of thought and habits of close observation which dis-

tinguish the great pronouncements on politics and society in Burke's later works. In his esthetic treatise Burke turned away from metaphysical deductions; he professed to be an empiricist and psychologist. He demonstrated that he was already a master at exposing flimsy theories, some of them venerable both for age and authority, and his passages of devastating criticism are among the most enjoyable of the *Enquiry*. Already he showed that remarkable power of observing important distinctions, such as had escaped one writer after another, but seem so very patent once he has pointed them out. After perusing the *Enquiry* with the aid of Mr. Boulton's introduction, the reader must be struck also with a fresh realization of the importance of Burke's rigorous and penetrating observation of human nature in society and government. Among the complexities of his rich mental equipment, not the least was his exact and discriminating scientific observation, without which any

political science lapses into mere speculation. We are now in the midst of a public discussion of the best methods of education. A pronouncement by Burke in his "Introduction on Taste" might be used as a starting point for a discussion of either education or Burke: "It must be acknowledged that the methods of disquisition and teaching may be sometimes different, and on very good reason undoubtedly; but for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation, is incomparably the best; since not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew; it tends to set the reader himself in the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable." We can recognize here a cast of mind which is more important also in his political thought than is often appreciated.

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## *Conservatism in the Suburbs*

DONALD A. ZOLL

PROFESSOR DONALD BRANDON's eulogy on the latent merits of the Silent Generation ("Conservatives, and the Lost and Silent Generations" — MODERN AGE, Winter 1958-59), caused me to wonder if he and I have been observing the same wave of American undergraduates and their precursors who have already taken up residence in the jerry-built villages that cling tenaciously to the outskirts of our urban centers. Professor Brandon finds these admittedly inarticulate post-adolescents a fertile area for the growth of conservative opinion. I would be considerably more content if evidence supported this belief — or even that the sharp pangs of opinion-formation at all could be gleaned from observation of the hope of the nation.

In contrasting the Lost and Silent Generations, Brandon finds an explanation for the post-World War II contingent by suggesting that it was product of a vague variety of realism engendered by depression and the undermining of "old certainties."

"It is really little wonder," he writes, "that the Silent Generation has found America basically good, for it participated in the military destruction of patently evil Fascist systems, and was soon made aware of the equally evil and even greater menace of Soviet and international Communism." I fail to grasp the logical imperative in this relationship. If the Silent Generation finds America "basically good," the suggestion is only that it appears better than something else. While this may be undeniably true, such a reaction does not ascribe to this so-labeled Silent Generation any substantial conviction either as to the intrinsic worth of the society or, more critically, its alarming difficulties. Brandon at one point states: ". . . they're not worried about the Republicans, but about the Russians taking it away." The "it" refers to the life of comfort or as Brandon also puts it, "what they have is good enough, and their only real fear stems from the Bombs." I submit that this is unconsciously a stark indict-

ment of the very generation Brandon seeks to defend. The implications are clear. Intemperately or not, the Lost Generation responded with some analytical temper, with courage and with a truly conservative zeal for unmasking doctrinaire hypocrisies be they social, religious or political. Conservatism is not sullen acquiescence or silent submission or unthinking lassitude. It is above all a state of mind in which the virtues of courage, forthrightness and individual conviction are paramount.

Brandon tells us, "The only 'expatriates' among the present generation are in the Foreign Service — serving the Government, not criticizing it, waiting anxiously for every home leave, and wishing they could find a job in America and settle down." I think Brandon misreads the character of the post-World War II generation, its profound discontents, its literal flights from the hygienic monotony of much of American life. Europe is filled and has been with such "expatriates," but they, too,

are largely "silent." Others grumble inaudibly with their suburban lot and furiously toy with rash thoughts of retreat from the organization juggernaut.

The Silent Generation is silent for the simple reason that it has nothing to say. It has sold its birthright, not for the proverbial mess of pottage, but for the quick-silver coin of protection in the form of social anonymity, the protective coloration of grey uniformity. These comments have a platitudinous ring, yet it is sometimes overlooked that depth of consciousness and richness of intellectual tone is the result of accumulated experience, the personality drawn hard in the firebath of experiment, discouragement, venture and even failure. The Silent Generation has become America's most provincial human product when measured against the wealth of cosmopolitan influences. This withdrawn attitude of mind, this timid reluctance to risk is why they have, in Brandon's words, "spurned pursuits larger than canasta and barbecue



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parties." I shudder at the thought of a nation of the middle-aged, yet those of us in the teaching profession witness these perplexing characteristics in the current undergraduate. But what Brandon calls "maturity" is unhappily only the superficial trappings of a set of young people whose adolescent, yet vital, need is for honorable combat with life; and that has been replaced by a incongruous worship of retirement plans, home ownership, "togetherness," "civic responsibility" and bizarre forms of consumption. The "unbought grace of life" is as foreign to this milieu as is any serious regard for social or communal values other than frantic self-indulgence to hide the growing psychic torments.

Professor Brandon has politely slandered the Lost Generation in maintaining that it was found wanting in philosophic value. Lostness is to be lamented, but it does involve the requisite quality of commitment to ideas, however open to criticism, that carries the individual out of the

comfortable hoglot into the wilderness. Why need we be so remorseful, Professor Brandon, over brave errors and so adulated over the slick symptoms of withdrawal? Are we to deify mass philistinism and esthetic indifference?

Perhaps my concept of conservatism — indeed, the New Conservatism — is remote from that of Professor Brandon. I cannot begin to entertain the notion that conservatism can ever be the counsel of uniformity, monotony or tongue-in-cheek orthodoxy. Conservatism is a view of life basically exciting, stressing color, diversity, vitality, individual attainment and cultivation, courage, and, above all the recognition of values transcending the pallid ones of material comfort and social acceptability. I read nothing of Samuel Smiles in the history of conservatism. I see no evidence of these latent conservative values in the Silent Generation. These cowering souls appear to me to be the offspring of John Dewey — born out of ideological wedlock.



## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

- Patrick M. Boarman*, translator of Professor Villey's essay, studied with Wilhelm Roepke, and is a member of the faculty of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.
- Louis I. Bredvold*, author of *The Intellectual Milieu of John Dryden*, is professor emeritus in English literature of the University of Michigan.
- William Henry Chamberlin*, whose *The Evolution of a Conservative* has just been published (Regnery), is editorial contributor to the *Wall Street Journal*.
- Will Herberg*, author of *Catholic, Protestant, Jew*, is graduate professor of social philosophy at Drew University.
- Anthony Kerrigan*, an American who lives in Mallorca, is an eloquent critic of letters, architecture, and society, and a translator of several of the principal modern Spanish writers.
- William McCann*, chief underwriter of the Michigan State Accident Fund, writes reviews for several journals, and edited *Ambrose Bierce's Civil War* (Gateway Editions).
- Thomas Molnar*, professor of French at Brooklyn College, spent several months in Europe recently. He contributes to many of the serious reviews in France and America.
- Ernest Mort, C.S.P.*, was recently ordained a priest of the Paulist Fathers; he is at St. Paul's College in Washington, and wrote his dissertation on Corporatism.
- Edward F. Renshaw*, author of *Toward Responsible Government*, is a member of the faculty of economics of the University of Chicago.
- Wilhelm Roepke*, of the University of Geneva, soon will publish in England and America his recent book *Beyond Supply and Demand*.
- Helmut Schoeck*, who received his doctoral degree from Harvard, is professor of sociology at Emory University. A recent economic study of his, published in Germany, will be reviewed in the next number of MODERN AGE.
- Peter J. Stanlis*, author of *Edmund Burke and the Natural Law*, teaches at the University of Detroit.
- Max Thurn-Valsassina*, an Austrian, has held several important posts in international economic bodies and in Austrian government.
- Ernest van den Haag*, author of *Education as an Industry*, is a professor of sociology and a psychiatrist.
- Francis Graham Wilson*, author of *The Case for Conservatism*, is professor of political science at the University of Illinois.
- Donald A. Zoll* teaches in the department of political science at the University of Tennessee. He is writing a book about Santayana's political thought.

